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LAMARTINE.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

I.

The hand of God is not evident in the details of human affairs; it is revealed in them as a whole. No sensible man has ever denied that the great events which make up the historical life of humanity are secretly bound together, and arranged in order by an invisible thread, suspended from the all-powerful hand of the Sovereign Ruler of worlds, in order that they may work together for a purposed end. How can He, who has given light to the eye, be blind? How can He, who has given thought to His creature, be Himself unthinking? The ancients called this hidden design, this absolute and irresistible working of God in human affairs, Destiny or Fatality; the moderns call it Providence, a more intelligent, more religious, and more paternal name.

In studying the history of humanity, it is impossible not to recognise, above and below the free action of man, the supreme and transparent action of Providence. This operation of Providence, on the whole and on the mass, does not in anything deprive our acts of liberty, in which alone consists the morality of individuals and nations; she apparently allows them to move, to act, to go astray with a complete latitude of purpose, and of choice of good or evil in a certain sphere of action and with a certain logical consequence of punishments incurred or rewards merited; but the grand general results of these acts of individuals or nations belong to her and to her alone—she seems to reserve them for herself, independently of us, for divine ends, of which we are ignorant and which she only allows us to see dimly when they are on the point of attainment. Good and evil are our possession and our concern; but Providence makes sport of our perversities as of our virtues, drawing from this good and evil, with the same infallible

wisdom, the accomplishment of her design for humanity. T So, v
hidden but divine instrument of this Providence, when seems
deigns to make use of man for the preparation or completiest to
of a portion of her plans, is inspiration. Inspiration is truly der
mystery of mankind, the source of which it is difficult to fiaced
in man himself. reece,

It seems to come from a higher and more distant origin, and the
for this reason, we have also given to it a mysterious namurope
which is not well defined in any language: Genius. The bir Whe
of a man of Genius is the work of Providence. Genius is rming
gift. It is not acquired by work, it is not even attainable preads
virtue; it either is or is not, without it being possible for tesar
very man who possesses it to give an account of its nature f Scot
of its possession. To this genius Providence sends inspiratioenden
Inspiration is to genius what the magnet is to metal. Sisia.
draws it, independently of all consciousness and will, to som Whe
thing fatal and unknown, like the pole. Genius follows thd the
inspiration that leads it on, and a moral or a material world be irre
revealed. Behold Christopher Columbus, and the discovery and inc
America! He arm
Islam t
betwee

II.

Columbus aspired in thought to the completion of the globLeban
which seemed to him to lack one of its halves. It was thunity o
want of harmony in terrestrial geography that troubled him So
This want was equally an inspiration of his time. There amonarc
ideas that float in the air like intellectual miasmas and whicines o
thousands of men seem to breathe at the same momenanity i
Every time that Providence prepares the world, unknown t Sow
itself, for some religious, moral, or political transformation, why the
can almost invariably observe this same phenomenon; ander,
aspiration and tendency, more or less complete, towards thetabl
unity of the globe by conquest, by language, by religion there
proselytism, by navigation, by geographical discovery, or lideas,
the multiplication of the relations of peoples amongst ther days,
selves, by means of the bringng nearer and the contact intello
these peoples, whom ways of communication, their needs an all the
trade bind together in a single nation. This tendency toward that h
the unity of the globe, at certain epochs, is one of the mo all.
clearly visible providential facts in the conclusions of history. On

humanity. So, when the great eastern civilization of India and Egypt
 ce, when seems exhausted by age, and God wishes to call Asia and the
 or completist to a younger, brisker, and more active civilization, Alex-
 ation is truly goes forth, without knowing why, from the valleys of
 difficult to Macedonia, drawing to himself the eyes and the auxiliaries of
 reece, and the known world becomes one under the terror
 ent origin, and the glory of his name, from the Indus to the extremity of
 sterious namurope.

us. The bir When He wishes to prepare a vast audience for the trans-
 Genius is rming word of Christianity in the East and in the West, He
 attainable preads the language, the dominion, the arms of Rome and
 ssible for tesar from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the mountains
 f its nature f Scotland, uniting under one mind and in one common de-
 ds inspiratioendence Italy, Gaul, Great Britain, Sicily, Greece, Africa and
 o metal. Sisia.

will, to som When He wishes, some centuries later, to snatch Arabia, Persia
 s follows thnd their dependencies from barbarism, and to make prevalent
 erial world he irresistible dogma of the unity of God over the idolatries
 e discovery and indifference of these remote or corrupt parts of the world,
 He arms Mahomet with the Coran and the sword ; He permits
 slam to conquer, in two centuries, all the space comprised
 between the Oxus and the Jagus, between Thibet and Mount
 of the globLebanon, between Mount Atlas and Mount Taurus. A great
 It was thunity of empire foreshadows a great unity of thought.

oubled him So with Charlemagne and the West, where his universal
 There amonarchy prepares, on both sides of the Alps, from the con-
 s and whicines of Scythia and Germany, the vast territory where Christi-
 he momenunity is to receive and baptise the barbarians.

unknown t So with the French revolution, that reform of the western world
 rmation, why the light of reason, when Napoleon, as enterprising as Alex-
 omenon ; ander, marches his victorious armies over the subject continent,
 towards testablishes for a moment the grand unity of France, and, thinking
 by religion there to found his empire, in reality only sows the phrases, the
 very, or lideas, and the institutions of the revolution. So in our own
 ongst ther days, no longer in the shape of conquest, but in the form of
 e contact intellectual, commercial and pacific communication between
 r needs an all the continents and all the peoples of the globe, it is science
 ncy toward that becomes the universal conqueror to the profit and glory of
 of the mo all.

of history. On this occasion Providence seems to have commissioned

the genius of industry and discovery to prepare for her the perfect unity of the terrestrial globe that has ever bound together time, space and mankind in a closer, more compact and better assimilated whole.

Navigation, printing, the discovery of steam, that economical and irresistible propeller, which launches man, his armies and his merchandise, as far and as swiftly as his thought ; the construction of railroads, which remove mountains by piercing them, and which level the whole earth ; the discovery of the electric telegraph, which gives to communications between the two hemispheres, the instantaneousness of lightning ; the discovery of balloons, which still wait for a rudder, but which will soon open to navigation an element that is more universal and less dangerous than the ocean ; all these nearly contemporaneous revelations of Providence through the inspiration of industrial genius, are means of binding the globe together, of concentrating and contracting it within itself ; means of drawing men together and making them more alike. These instruments are so active and so evident, that it is impossible not to see in them a final intention of Providence, a crowning effort towards the unknown, and not to conclude that God is premeditating, for us and for our descendants, some design which is still concealed from our short vision, a design for the accomplishment of which He takes His measures, in urging forward the world towards the most powerful of unities, the unity of thought, which foretells some great unity of action in the future.

In this way the mind of the fifteenth century was prepared for some strange manifestation, either human or divine, when the great man, whose history we are about to relate, was born. There was an expectation of something : for the mind of man has its presentiments. They are the vague predictions of realities which are drawing near.

III.

In the spring of the year 1471, at mid-day, under a burning sun that baked the roads in Andalusia, on a hill about half a mile from the little seaport of Palos, two strangers who were travelling on foot, their shoes worn out by walking, their clothes, which showed the remains of some degree of wealth, soiled by dust

for her the more their foreheads bathed in perspiration, stopped and sat down under the shadow of the outer porch of a little monastery, more comfortable than the one called Saint Mary of Rabida.

Their appearance and their weariness alone begged for hospitality. The Franciscan monasteries were, at that time, the only places of shelter for those foot travellers whom poverty forbade to approach other places of shelter. The group formed by the two strangers attracted the attention of the monks.

One of them was a man who had scarcely reached the prime of life, tall, well built, of fine carriage, with a noble brow, an open countenance, a thoughtful look, a sweet and kindly mouth. His hair, light brown in early youth, was prematurely tinged about the temples by those white locks which are hastened by anxiety and misfortune. His brow was lofty; his complexion, originally ruddy, was pale from study and bronzed by the sun and the sea. The sound of his voice was manly, sonorous and penetrating as the tones of one who was wont to give utterance to great thoughts. Nothing frivolous or careless was visible in his slightest gestures; he seemed to respect himself without presumption, or to observe in his actions the reserve of a pious man in a church, as if he had been in the presence of God.

The other was a child eight or ten years old. His features, more feminine, but already accentuated by the hardships of life, bore such a likeness to that of the first stranger, that it was impossible not to see in him either a son or a brother of the mature man.

IV.

These two strangers were Christopher Columbus and his son Diego. The monks, moved to curiosity and pity by the noble face of the father and by the grace of the child, which were in contrast to the poverty of their dress, invited them inside the monastery to offer them the shade, bread and rest which are the right of pilgrims.

Whilst Columbus and his son were refreshing and strengthening themselves with the water, the bread, and the olives of their hosts' table, the monks went to inform the Prior of the arrival of the two travellers, and of the strange interest attaching to their distinguished appearance, which so strikingly contrasted with their poverty.

The Prior came down to talk to them. This superior of the monastery of Rabida was Juan Pérès de Marchenna, a former confessor to Queen Isabella, who at that time shared with Ferdinand the throne of Spain.

A holy man, fond of knowledge and meditation, he had preferred the shelter of his cloister to the honours and intrigues of the court, but by this very retirement he had retained the deference and respect of the court as well as great influence over the mind of the Queen. Providence, no less than chance, had directed thus, the footsteps of Columbus, if she had indeed the intention of opening to him, by a trusty though invisible hand, the doors of the sovereign Privy Council and the ear and heart of the Sovereigns.

V.

The Prior welcomed the strangers, caressed the child, and enquired kindly into the circumstances which compelled them to travel the devious roads of Spain on foot and to borrow shelter from the lowly roof of a poor and isolated monastery. Columbus related his obscure life-history and unrolled his great ideas before the listening monk. That life and those ideas were but a hope and a conviction. What was afterwards known about them is as follows :

VI.

Christopher Columbus was the eldest son of a wool-carder of Genoa, to-day a very humble calling, at that time a liberal and almost noble profession.

In those industrial and commercial Italian republics, the artisans, proud of re-discovering or evolving industries, formed corporations ennobled by their art and of importance in the State.

He was born in 1436. He had two brothers, Bartholomew and Diego, whom he sent for later on to share his labours, his glory and his misfortunes ; he also had a sister younger than his brothers ; she married a Genoese workman, and her obscurity kept her for a long time removed from the splendour and adversity of her brothers.

Our instincts are formed by the first sights that nature offers to our senses in the place where we are born, particularly when

This superior view of the sights are majestic and boundless as the mountains, the archenna, a forest, and the sea. Our imagination is the feeble imitation and we shared with the mirror of the first scenes that strike us. When Columbus was a child, his eyes first rested on the sky and sea of Genoa. From that time, he had preternatural vision and navigation early drew his thoughts to these two worlds and their intrigues and chances lying open to his view. He filled them with his fancy and retained the deep impressions of new-stockings them with their continents and isles. Conquer the mind contemplative, silent, inclined to piety from his earliest years, he directed this, while still a child, borne by his genius into space, not only to the discovery of new discovery, but to a deeper adoration. For that which opens the doors of the world sought beneath all in the divine handiwork was God.

reigns.

VII.

His father, a man of intelligence and well-to-do in his profession, did not oppose the disposition which showed itself in the sedulous tastes of his son. He sent him to Pavia to study geography, astronomy, astrology, the chimerical science of the time, and navigation. His mind quickly passed the limits of these then imperfect sciences. His was one of those souls which always go beyond the mark where ordinary men stop towards knowledge with the cry : enough !

When he was fourteen, he knew all that was taught in the schools, and returned to his family at Genoa. His father's sedentary and unintellectual profession, could not confine his faculties. For several years he sailed on trading vessels, on men-of-war, on voyages of adventure, which Genoese houses fitted out on the Mediterranean to dispute its waters and its harbours with the Spaniards, with the Arabs and Mahometans, a sort of perpetual crusade where trade, war and religion made, from these sea affairs of the Italian republics, a school of commerce, of gain, heroism and sanctity. At once soldier, scholar and sailor, he embarked on the vessels which his country lent to the Duke of Anjou to conquer Naples, on the fleet which the King of Naples sent to attack Tunis, and on the squadrons with which Genoa fought Spain.

He raised himself, it is said, to the command of obscure naval expeditions in the military marine of his country. But history loses sight of him in these beginnings of his life. His destiny was not there ; he felt himself confined in these narrow seas and

in these narrow enterprises. His imagination was greater than his country. He meditated a conquest for humanity at large and not for a small republic in Liguria.

VIII.

In the intervals between these expeditions, Christopher Columbus found, in the study of his art, at once the satisfaction of his passion for geography and navigation, and his mode of livelihood. He designed, engraved and sold his marine charts; and though this small trade was hardly sufficient for his existence, he rather looked to it for the advancement of science than for gain. His mind and intellect, continually fixed on the stars and the ocean, prosecuted in idea an end foreseen by himself alone.

A shipwreck, following a naval engagement, and the burning of a galley that he commanded in the Bay of Lisbon, fixed his abode in Portugal. He threw himself into the sea to escape the flames, seized an oar with one hand, and, swimming towards the shore with the other, reached the beach. Portugal was absorbed at that time by the passion of maritime discovery; it was a place of residence which suited with his inclinations. He hoped that he would find there, both opportunity and means of putting to sea at his pleasure; he found in reality only the ill-paid and sedentary occupation of a geographer, obscurity and little love. Going daily to the services at a convent church in Lisbon, he conceived an attachment for a young recluse, whose beauty had struck him. She was the daughter of an Italian nobleman in the Portuguese service. Her father, when setting out on a distant naval expedition, had entrusted her to the nun of this convent. Attracted on her side by the thoughtful and majestic beauty of the young stranger, whom she saw regularly at the daily services of the church, she returned the love with which she had inspired him. As they were both in a foreign country without relations or money, there was nothing to oppose the inclination which they felt towards each other; they were married, trusting to Providence and hard work, the sole dowry of Philippa and her lover. For the support of his mother-in-law, his wife and himself, he continued the manufacture of maps and globes which, on account of their perfection, were much sought for by Portuguese sailors. The papers of his father-in-

was greater than which were given to him by his wife, and his corresponding humanity at lance with Joscanelli, the famous Florentine geographer, furnished him, it is said, with precise knowledge concerning the distant Indian Ocean, and the means of correcting the first principles of navigation, at that time confused and fabulous.

While entirely wrapped up in his domestic happiness and geographical studies, his first son was born, whom he called Diego after his brother. His circle of friends consisted wholly of sailors returning from distant expeditions, or dreaming of unknown countries and of routes not yet traced upon the ocean.

The workshop where he fashioned his maps and globes was the centre of ideas, of conjectures and projects that constantly spoke to his imagination of some great discovery not yet made upon the globe. His wife, the daughter and sister of sailors, also shared in these enthusiasms. As he outlined his globes with his fingers and marked his maps with islands and continents, a mighty void in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean impressed Columbus. At that spot the earth seemed to lack the counterpoise of a continent. Rumours, vague, marvelous and terrible, spoke to sailors' imaginations, of shores dimly visible from the summits of the Azores; of islands, motionless or float-ality only thing which appeared in clear weather, only to disappear or to withdraw into the distance, when rash pilots tried to approach them. A Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, who was then looked upon as an inventor of fables, but whose truthfulness has since been acknowledged by time, narrated to the western world the marvels of the continents, kingdoms and civilization of Tartary, India and China, which were supposed to extend to where the two Americas lie in reality. Columbus himself hoped to find, at the extremity of the Atlantic, those lands of gold, pearls and myrrh, from which Solomon drew his riches, that Ophyr of the Bible since hidden in the cloud land of the distant and the marvelous. It was not a new, but a lost continent, for which he sought. The attraction of the false led him to the true.

Following Ptolemy and the Arabian geographers, he supposed, in his calculations, that the earth was a globe of which one could make the circuit. He thought this globe to be smaller than it is by some thousands of miles. He consequently imagined that the extent of sea to be traversed in

order to reach these unknown parts of India, was less gritting than sailors thought it,

The existence of these countries seemed to him to be confirmed by the strange testimony of the captains who had advanced the furthest beyond the Azores. Some had seen floating on the waves, branches of trees unknown in the western world; others pieces of carved wood, which had not been worked with iron tools; some, enormous firs, a single trunk hollowed into a canoe, which could carry eighty rowers; others, gigantic reeds; some, lastly, corpses of men, white or copper coloured, whose features resembled in nothing the Western, Asiatic, or African races.

All these floating indications, from time to time, in the wake of ocean storms, and I know not what vague instinct that always precedes the reality, as the shadow goes before the body when one has the sun behind him, foretold wonders to the common herd, and proved to Columbus the existence of lands beyond the shores marked out by the hand of geographers on the charts of the world.

Only he was convinced that these lands were but a prolongation of Asia, filling more than a third of the circumference of the globe. The extent of that circumference, then unknown to philosophers and geometricians, left to conjecture the extent of the ocean that had to be crossed to reach this imaginary Asia.

Some thought it incommensurable; others imagined it to be a kind of deep and boundless ether, in which sailors lose their way like aeronauts to-day in the wastes of the firmament. The greater number, ignorant of the laws of gravitation and attraction, which draw bodies towards the centre, and yet already admitting the rotundity of the globe, believed that ships or men, carried by chance to the Antipodes, would break loose from their attachment, to fall into the abysses of space.

The laws which govern the level and the movements of the ocean were equally unknown to them. They thought of the sea, beyond a certain horizon, defined by islands already discovered, as a sort of liquid chaos, the enormous waves of which rose into inaccessible mountains, hollowed into bottomless whirlpools, rushed down from heaven in impassable cataclysms, which sucked in and swallowed up the vessels rash enough to approach them. The better instructed, while ad-

was less gritting the laws of gravitation and a certain level for expanses liquid, thought that the rounded form of the earth gave the man an incline towards the Antipodes, which would carry him towards nameless shores, but which would never allow him to re-climb this slope to return to Europe. From these various prejudices respecting the nature, the form, the extent, and the acclivities and declivities of the ocean, there was hollowed into a wide-spread and mysterious terror, which a man of gigantic reed investigating genius could alone approach in thought, and one coloured, whose more than human audacity alone sail out to meet. It was the struggle of a human soul against an element; to attempt it, it needed more than man.

IX.

The unconquerable attraction which this enterprise had for the poor geographer was the real tie which kept Columbus for many years at Lisbon, as if in the country of his dreams. It was the moment when Portugal, under the government of John II., an enlightened and enterprising prince, gave herself up, in a spirit of colonisation, trade, and adventure, to a succession of naval attempts to bind Europe to Asia, and when Vasco de Gama, the Portuguese colonist, was on the point of discovering the sea route to India by the Cape of Good Hope.

Columbus, convinced that he would find a more open and more direct route by sailing straight before him to the west, obtained, after long solicitation, an audience of the King, to lay his plans of discovery before him, and to ask him for the means of their accomplishment to the advantage of his kingdom, both in profit and glory.

The King listened to him with interest. The faith of this unknown man in his hopes did not appear to him sufficiently devoid of foundation to be relegated to the rank of chimeras. Columbus, besides his natural eloquence, possessed the eloquence of conviction. The King was sufficiently impressed to commission a council, consisting of scholars and politicians, to examine the proposal of the Genoese sailor, and to report to him on the probabilities of his enterprise. This council, which included the King's confessor and some geographers whose in-

fluence was great at court, in proportion to the smallness of their difference from common prejudice, declared the ideas of Columbus to be chimerical, and contrary to all the laws of physics and religion.

A second examining council, to which Columbus appeared, with the King's permission, gave a decision more unfavourable than the first. Nevertheless, by a piece of perfidy unknown to the King, his counsellors imparted these plans to a certain captain, and secretly despatched a vessel without the knowledge of Columbus to attempt the route to Asia which he had indicated. This ship, having penetrated some days' sail beyond the Azores, returned, terrified by the void and the immense sea of space, half seen, and confirmed the council in its contempts for the conjectures of Columbus.

X.

While vainly soliciting the Portuguese Court, the unfortunate Columbus had lost his wife, at once his love and consolation and the hopeful inspiration of his dreams. His means of livelihood, neglected for prospects of discovery, were at a low ebb; his creditors were eager for the fruits of his labour, they seized his globes and charts, and even threatened his liberty. Many years had thus been lost in waiting; he was approaching middle life; his son was growing up; the extremes of misery were the only patrimony he saw before him, instead of the world he had outlined for himself.

He stole away by night from Lisbon, on foot, without other resources than hospitality by the way, now leading his son Diego by the hand, now carrying him on his strong shoulders when he entered Spain, decided to offer to Ferdinand and Isabella, who were then on the throne, that continent which Portugal had refused.

It was in the prosecution of this long pilgrimage to the ever-shifting seat of the Spanish court, that he had reached the door of the monastery of Rabida, near Palos. He proposed to go first to the little town of Huerta, in Andalusia, where a brother of his wife was living, to leave his son Diego in the hands of this brother-in-law, and to face alone the delays, the hazards and perhaps the incredulity of the court of Ferdinand and Isabella.

the smallness. It is said that before going to Spain, he had thought it
 declared the ideas duty, as an Italian and a Genoese, first to offer his discov-
 all the laws of p to Genoa, as his native country, and to the Venetian Sen-
 ; but these two republics, taken up by ambitions nearer
 Columbus appeare, and by more pressing rivalries, answered his solicitations
 more unfavourable coldness and refusal.

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XI.

t the knowledThe Prior of the monastery of Rabida was better versed in
 which he had in sciences relating to navigation than pertained to a man of
 days' sail beyon profession. His monastery, which commanded a view of
 the immense sea, and was near the small harbour of Palos, one of the
 in its contentsiest in Andalusia, had thrown the monk constantly into the
 ciety of the navigators and shipowners of this little town,
 icht was entirely given up to sea affairs.

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His studies, whilst he resided at the capital, and the court,
 d turned in the direction of the natural sciences and the
 oblems that were exercising men's minds. He was moved
 first by pity, and, soon afterward, when talking to Columbus
 the subjects of the day, by conviction and enthusiasm for a
 an who seemed to him so superior to his circumstances.

He saw in him one of the emissaries of God, who are driven
 om the thresholds of princes and cities, to which they bring
 their needy hands the invisible treasures of truth. Religion
 understood genius, which is also a revelation demanding its
 believers like the other. The monk felt himself drawn to be
 ne of these worshippers who share in the revelations of genius,
 ot by discovery, but by faith. Providence generally sends one
 f these believers to eminent men, to keep them from discour-
 gement in the face of the incredulity, harshness or persecu-
 ons of the crowd: theirs is the most sublime form of friend-
 hip, these friends of truth misunderstood, and confidants of
 n impracticable future.

Juan Peres, in the depths of his solitude, felt himself predes-
 tined by heaven to introduce Columbus to the favour of Isa-
 bella, and to become the apostle of his great design in the
 world. What he appreciated in Columbus was not only his
 purpose, it was himself, it was his elegance, disposition and
 courage; modesty, seriousness and eloquence; piety, virtue
 and sweetness; grace, patience, and misfortune nobly borne,

that revealed in this stranger one of those natures marked by a thousand perfections, with the divine seal, which forbids to pass by, and compels us to admire the unique man.

After their first conversation, the monk not only yielded by conviction to his guest, he gave him his heart, and, what the rarer thing, he never withdrew it from him. Columbus then a friend.

XII.

Juan Peres induced Columbus to accept a shelter for his days, or at least a resting place for himself and his child, in a humble monastery. During this short stay, the Prior told of his friends in the town, who lived near Palos, of the arrival and adventures of the guest who was visiting him. He invited Columbus to the monastery to talk to the stranger about his conjectures, intentions and plans, in order to find out if his theories agreed with the ideas which the sailors of Palos had formed from experience. An eminent man, who was a friend of the Prior, his brother, Fernandez, and Pierre de Velasco, an experienced navigator living at Palos, came, on the monk's invitation, to pass several evenings at the monastery; they listened to Columbus, their eyes opened by his conversation, and entered into his ideas with all the warmth of upright minds and simple hearts, forming that first reunion where all new faiths are born in, a firm trust of a few proselytes, in the shadow of intimacy, in a solitude and solitude. Every great truth begins as a secret between friends before bursting full-voiced on the world. These friends, whom Columbus had won over to his convictions in the cell of a poor monk, were perhaps dearer to him than the enthusiasm and applause of all Spain, when success had corroborated his forecasts. The former believed on the assurance of his word, the latter were to believe only on the witness of his consummated discoveries.

XIII.

The monk, confirmed in his impressions through the testimony of his ideas by the learning of Dr. Fernandez, and the experience of Velasco, the sailor, became, together with these, warmly interested in his guest.

He persuaded him to leave his son under his care in the monastery of Rabida, and to go to the court to offer his

natures markery to Ferdinand and Isabella, soliciting from these sovereigns, which forbids the necessary assistance for the accomplishment of his unique man. Chance rendered an introduction from the humble not only yielded both natural and powerful at the Spanish court. He had heart, and, what there for a considerable time, holding the ear of the . Columbus then as keeper of her conscience, and, since his taste for repent had withdrawn him from the Palace, he had maintained friendly relations with the new confessor whom he had recommended to the Queen.

at a shelter for his confessor, the controller of the consciences of kings at and his child, in epoch, was Fernando de Talavera, the superior of the monastery of the Prado, a worthy, influential, and upright man, to of the arrival in every door in the Palace was open. Juan Peres handed He invited Columbus a warm letter of recommendation for Fernando de out his conjecture. He supplied him with a suitable outfit for his prehis theories agitation at court, a mule, a guide, a purse of sequins, and, formed from embracing him at the gate of the monastery, commended him of the Prior, his project to the God who inspires men with great experienced navigators.

on, to pass several
to Columbus,

XIV.

entered into Columbus set out for Cordova, which was then the residence and simple he court, filled with gratitude to his first and generous ns are born in ad, who never lost sight of him or withdrew his interest in of intimacy, n, and to whom he afterwards invariably ascribed the origin s a secret betwix fortune. He went forward with that confidence of success world. These ch is the illusion, but also the guiding star of genius. The his convictionsion was soon to be dissipated, and the star soon to be ob- r to him thanked.

success had co the moment when the Genoese adventurer came to offer a the assurance to the crown of Spain seemed badly chosen ; Ferdinand ne witness of Isabella, far from thinking of the conquest of problematical possessions beyond unknown seas, were occupied in the request of their own kingdom from the Spanish Moors. These successful conquerors of the Peninsula, after a long and prosperous possession, saw themselves deprived one by one of the rough the territories and provinces, of which they now only held the mountainous and valleys surrounding Grenada, the capital and marvel their empire. Ferdinand and Isabella employed all their his care in wer, all their efforts, and all the resources of their two united to offer his

kingdoms to wrest this citadel of Spain from the Moors. United by a marriage of policy, which love had consolidated, and a common glory rendered illustrious, one had brought dowry the kingdom of Arragon, the other the kingdom of Castile, to this community of crowns. But, although the King and Queen had thus blended their separate provinces in one country, they nevertheless retained a distinct and independent system over their hereditary kingdoms. They had their separate ministers and council for the special interests of their former personal subjects.

These councils were only united in a single government on behalf of the patriotic interests common to the two ends and to the King and Queen. Nature seemed to have endued these two sovereigns with forms, qualities, and perfections of body and mind, different, but nearly equal, as if to render perfect in the two the reign of prestige, conquest, civilization, prosperity, for which she destined them. Ferdinand, somewhat older than Isabella, was an accomplished soldier and consummate politician. Before the age when a man learns by sad experience to know his fellows, he divined them. His faults were a certain incredulity and coldness which arose from distrust, and which shut the heart to enthusiasm and generosity. But these two virtues, which he lacked in some degree, were supplied in his councils by the gentleness of soul and overflowing heart and genius of Isabella. Young, beautiful, the most admired of all, adored by him, learned, pious without superbia, eloquent, full of fire for great deeds, attracted by greatness, hopeful of great ideas, she impressed on the heart and the policy of Ferdinand the heroism which springs from the soul, the marvellous which is born of the imagination. She inspired him with the execution; the one found her recompense in her husband's renown, the other his glory in his wife's admiration and love.

This double reign, which was to become almost fabulous for Spain, but waited, to be ever immortalized among all people, awaited the arrival of this poor stranger who came to beg admittance into the palace at Cordova, bearing the letter of a lowly monarch in his hand.

XV.

This letter, which the Queen's confessor read with scepticism and prejudice, only opened to Columbus a long series of anticipation, discouragement, and audiences refused.

ain from the M only in retirement and leisure that men have ears for
love had consol projects. In the ferment of business and of courts, they
s, one had brou neither the time or the good-will.

er the kingdom Columbus was repulsed at every door, because he was a
although the King, says the historian Oviedo, the contemporary of that
provinces in one man, because he was poorly clad, and because he
t and independent to courtiers and ministers no other recommendation
had their separat the letter of a solitary Franciscan monk, who had been
ets of their forme forgotten at court.

ie King and Queen did not even hear of him; Isabella's
single governessor, either from contempt or indifference, completely
n to the two ed the hope which Juan Peres had placed in him. Colum-
emed to have en as steadfast as certainty that awaits its time, remained at
ies, and perfectilova, in order to watch upon the spot for a more favourable
al, as if to rendent. When, in long waiting, he had exhausted the small
quest, civilization, which his friend, the Prior of Rabida, had given him,
m. Ferdinand, ined a wretched living by his small trade in globes and
nplished soldiera, playing with the representations of a world which he
when a man leato conquer.

vined them. His rough and uncomplaining existence during these many
dness which arise allows us, in the depths of his obscurity, but a glimpse of
usiasm and genechedness, hard work, and hopes deceived.

in some degreevertheless, young and tender of heart, he loved and was
s of soul and owed during these years of trial; for a second son, Ferdinand,
ung, beautiful, tborn about this time of a mysterious love affair, which
us without superiage never consecrated, and the memory of which he
tracted by grealls in his will in touching words of remorse. This illegiti-
the heart and te son he brought up with as much tenderness as his other
ngs from the so Diego.

ination. She in
ense in her hus

XVI.

admiration and leMeanwhile, his refinement and dignified presence showed
me almost fabulough the disguise of his humble calling. The distinguished
zed among all le, with whom he was occasionally brought in contact by
e to beg admittalealings in scientific instruments, received from his person
er of a lowly mcon conversation an impression of astonishment and charm,
h, like the lightning flash, blazes forth from mean surround-
the greatness of a destiny. These business transactions
or read with sce conversations imperceptibly gained him friends, whose
mbus a long vies have been preserved by history to share the gratitude of
ces refused.

the future world ; it mentions Alonzo de Quintanilla, Controller of the Queen's Finances ; Geraldini, tutor of the princes, her sons ; Antonio Geraldini, Papal Nuncio at court of Ferdinand ; and, last, Mendoza, Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, a man of such influence that he was called the King of Spain.

XVII.

The Archbishop of Toledo, frightened at first by geographical innovations which seemed, erroneously, to contradict the conceptions of the celestial mechanism contained in the Bible, was soon reassured by the sincere and remarkable piety of Columbus. He ceased to fear a blasphemy in which he exalted the works and the wisdom of God. Attracted by the system and charmed by the man, he obtained for Columbus a protégé an audience of his sovereigns. Columbus, after two days of waiting, appeared at this audience with the modesty of an unassuming stranger, but with the confidence of a tributary who brings to his masters more than they can give to him.

"In thinking of what I was," he himself wrote later, "I was abashed by humility ; but, reflecting on what I brought, I considered myself the equal of kings ; I was no longer myself, I was the instrument of God, chosen and marked out for the accomplishment of a great design."

XVIII.

Ferdinand listened to Columbus with seriousness, Isabella with enthusiasm. From his first look and from his first address she conceived for this messenger of God an admiration which amounted to fanaticism, and an attraction which touched her tenderness. Nature had endowed Columbus with the personal charms that captivate the eye, as well as with the eloquence that persuades the mind. One would have said that she had signed him to have a queen for his first apostle, and that the truths with which he was to enrich his age were to be welcomed and cherished in a woman's heart. Isabella was this woman, her faithfulness to Columbus neither failed before the influence of her court, or before his enemies, or his misfortunes. She believed in him from the first day, she was his proselyte on the throne and his friend till death.

de Quintanilla, (Dinand, after hearing Columbus, appointed an examining
 inini, tutor of the li to meet at Salamanca, under the presidency of Fernando
 Papal Nuncio il to meet at Salamanca, under the presidency of Fernando
 Cardinal Archlavera, Prior of the Prado. This council was composed of
 he was called the rom the two kingdoms who were best versed in the sacred
 profane sciences. It met in this literary capital of Spain,
 Dominican monastery, where Columbus was a guest.
 priests and monks were at that time the arbiters of every-
 ned at first by in Spain. Civilization had its being in the sanctuary.
 erroneously, to were only monarchs of their actions, their thoughts be-
 mechanism contained to the Pope. The Inquisition, that sacerdotal police,
 sincere and remained, reached and struck, even under the shadow of the
 a blasphemy in, all that incurred the taint of heresy. The King had
 om of God. And to this council professors of astronomy, geography and
 n, he obtained the sciences taught at Salamanca. This auditory did not
 Columbus, after two date Columbus; he hoped to be judged by his peers, he
 with the modesty idged only by those who despised him. The first time he
 ence of a tributar red in the great hall of the monastery, the monks and pre-
 give to him. d men of science, convinced beforehand that every theory
 elf wrote later, "ent beyond their knowledge or routine was but the dream
 what I brought, eased or presumptuous mind, only saw in this obscure
 nger myself, I wa er an adventurer seeking a fortune from his chimeras. No
 out for the accom ondescended to listen to him, with the exception of two
 ee monks from the monastery of St. Etienne of Salamanca,
 le men and without authority, who gave themselves up in
 cloister to studies which were scorned by the superior
 a seriousness, Is. The other examiners overwhelmed Columbus by quo-
 from his first acc s from the Bible, the prophets, the psalms, the gospels and
 d an admiration hers of the church that pulverized beforehand, by texts
 n which touched admitted of no discussion, the theory of the globe and
 mbus with the per aciful and impious existence of the antipodes. Lactance,
 s with the eloq others, had formally explained his position in this respect
 have said that she passage which was brought forward against Columbus.
 apostle, and tha there anything so absurd," Lactance had said, "as the
 e were to be welc that there are antipodes who have their feet opposite to
 bella was this w men who walk with their heels in the air and their heads
 ed before the inc ground, a part of the world where everything is upside
 s, or his misfort where the trees grow with their roots in the air and their
 e was his prosely ces in the earth."

Augustine had gone even further, for he had called the
 belief in the antipodes an iniquity:

"For," said he, "that would be to suppose there are that do not descend from Adam ; but the Bible says men descend from one and the same parent."

Other learned doctors, taking a poetical metaphorical system of the world, quoted to the geographer this verse of psalm where it says, God stretched the heaven over the earth like a tent, whence it followed, according to them, that the earth must be flat.

It was in vain that Columbus answered his interrogators with a piety which did not refuse to take into account the nature ; it was in vain that, respectfully following them on logical ground, he showed himself to be more religious and more orthodox than they, because he was more enthusiastic in his works of God. The thunders and lightning of his eloquence, impassioned by truth, were lost on the wilful darkness of the stubborn minds. Only a few monks seemed stirred by or shaken by conviction at his voice. Diego de Deza, a monk of the Dominican order and a man in advance of his time, afterwards became Archbishop of Toledo, generously volunteered to combat the prejudices of the council and to lend the force of his word and authority to Columbus. This unexpected support could not overcome the indifference or obstinacy of the others. The conferences were renewed, without leading to any conclusion. They finally flagged, harassing the truth by a maze of subtleties that are the last refuge of error. They were interrupted by a fresh war which Ferdinand and Isabella waged against the Moors of Grenada. Columbus, put off, saddened, scorned, dismissed, sustained only by the favour of Isabella and the request of Diego de Deza to his theory, pitifully followed the king and the army from camp to camp and city to city, waiting in vain for an hour's attention, which the tumult of arms prevented him from obtaining. Meanwhile the Queen, as constant secret favour which she bore him as fortune was unchangeable, continued to have good hope of this unappreciated genius and to extend him her protection. She had a house reserved for Columbus at all the halting places of the court, and the treasurer was charged to entertain the learned foreigner as an importunate guest who begs assistance, but as a distinguished visitor who honours the kingdom and whose services the king wished to retain.

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XIX.

Several years passed by, during which the King of Portugal, the King of England and the King of France, having heard of their ambassadors of this wonderful man, who held out the promise of a new world, had tempting proposals to Columbus to enter their service.

The tender gratitude which he had vowed to Isabella, and the love which he bore Beatrice Enriques of Cordova, who was the mother of his second son Ferdinand, caused him to reject the offers, and kept him in the suite of the court. He refused an empire for the young Queen in return for her kindness to him. He was present at the siege and conquest of Granada; he saw Boabdil restore to Ferdinand and Isabella the keys of that capital, the palaces of the Abencerages and the towers of the Alhambra. He was in the train of the Spanish king at their triumphal entry into this last refuge of Isabella. He saw beyond these ramparts and these valleys of Granada other triumphal entries into vaster possessions. To him seemed little in comparison with his dreams:

The peace which followed this conquest, in 1492, led to a general meeting at Seville of the examiners of his plans, who were to give their opinion to the crown. This opinion, vainly expected, as at Salamanca, by Diego de Deza, was to reject the project of the Genoese adventurer, if not as impious, at least as impractical, and as compromising the dignity of the Spanish crown, which could not authorize an enterprise on such a weak foundation.

Ferdinand, influenced, however, by Isabella, softened the decision of this resolution of the council in communicating it to Columbus, whom he led to hope that, as soon as he obtained the full possession of Spain by the final expulsion of the Moors, the court would help, with ships and subsidies, that expedition the recovery and conquest of which he had spoken to him for many years.

XX.

While waiting, without much hope, the ever-postponed fulfilment of the King's promises and of the more sincere desires of Isabella, Columbus tried to persuade two great Spanish

noblemen, the dukes of Medina-Sidonia and Medina, undertake the enterprise at their own expense. Both possessed ships and harbours on the Spanish coast. They at first pleased by these prospects of glory and maritime sessions for their houses, but they afterwards abandoned from incredulity or indifference.

Envy was raging against Columbus even before he served it by success ; it persecuted him, as if by anticipation and instinct, even in his expectations, for it disputed the session of what it called his chimeras.

With tears he again abandoned his endeavours. The selfishness of the ministers in granting him a hearing, the obstinacy of the monks in rejecting his ideas as scientific sacrilegious empty promises and eternal postponements of the course of his life, after six years of anguish, into such a state of discontent that he finally relinquished all fresh solicitation to the Spanish sovereigns, and resolved to go to France and offer his empire to the King, from whom he had received some assurances.

Ruined in fortune, depressed in hope, worn out by want and heartbroken by the necessity of tearing himself away from the love which bound him to Beatrice, he again left Cordova on foot, if not with prospects for the future, at least towards the monastery of Rabida, to find his faithful friend, Juan Perez. He intended to take away his son Diego, whom he had left there, to bring him back to Cordova and confide him, on his departure for France, to the charge of Beatrice, the mother of his natural son, Ferdinand. The two brothers, thus brought up in the care and love of the same woman, would feel for each other the brotherly affection which was the only consolation that he had to leave them.

XXI.

Tears flowed from the eyes of the Prior, Juan Peres, when he saw his friend knocking at the door of the monastery, and still more miserably clad than on the first occasion, sufficiently attesting, by his threadbare clothes and the sadness of his countenance, the scepticism of men and the ruin of his hopes. But his presence had hidden anew the spring of fortune for Colum-

onia and Medina-art of friendship. The faith of the poor monk in the expense. Both and future of his protege's discoveries, instead of depressing his spirit, and charitably lent him strength in the face of adversity and maritime misfortunes. He greeted his guest, lamented and con- sidered his situation; but, quickly calling up all his energy and fortitude, he sent to the palace for Dr. Fernandez, the former physician, and even before he was aware of the secret of Columbus, for Alonzo Pinzon, a rich merchant, and him, as if by anticipation of the seaport, and Sebastian Rodriguez of Lepi, an experienced pilot, for it disputed the pilot.

The ideas of Columbus, unrolled afresh before this little assembly of friends, made the hearers more and more enthusiastic. They besought him to remain and again tempt fortune, for Spain, although ungrateful and incredulous, the scientific sacrilege of an enterprise unique in history. Pinzon promised to furnish the equipment of the immortal flotilla with his vessels and his wealth, as soon as the Government had consented to the project. Juan Peres wrote no longer to the Queen's confidant, but to the Queen herself, to interest her conscience as much as her glory in an enterprise which would lead whole nations from idolatry to the true faith. He made earth and heaven speak for him, finding warmth and persuasion in his friendship. He again left for the greatness of his country and in his friendship. Columbus refusing, in his discouragement, to be the bearer of such a future, at least to a court the delays and neglect of which he had so much to fear, Juan Peres, whom he felt, the pilot Rodriguez himself undertook the commission and confide him, on to carry it to Grenada, where the court was then staying. He left, accompanied by the good wishes and prayers of his brothers, thus to the monastery and of the friends of Columbus at Palos. The woman, would the next day after his departure he was seen returning in person, which was the only ph to the monastery. The Queen had read the letter of

Peres, the perusal of which had revived all her prepossessions in favour of the Genoese. She immediately commanded the venerable Prior to come to the court, and sent him to Columbus to wait at the Monastery of Rabida for the return of Juan Peres, and the resolution of the Council. When Peres returned to the monastery, Juan Peres, intoxicated by his friend's success, had his mule sent on the next occasion, without an hour's delay and set out the same night, across the country, infested as it was by the Moors. But the sadness of his hopes. But felt that heaven protected, in his person, the great design of fortune for Columbus he held in trust in the person of his friend. He reached

his destination, and the doors of the palace opened at his approach. He saw the Queen, rekindling in her, by the fervency of his conviction, the faith and interest which, of her own accord, she had conceived for this great work. The Marchioness of Isabella's favourite, became, from piety and enthusiasm, on behalf of the protege of the saintly monk. The womanly hearts, excited in favour of the projects of a great adventurer by a monk's eloquence, triumphed over the opposition of the court.

Isabella sent Columbus a sum of money, taken from her private treasure, to enable him to buy a mule and clothes, so that he might immediately come to the court. Juan Pacheco, who remained with the Queen to support his friend in his word and deed, sent this good news and monetary assistance to Columbus by Rabida by a messenger, who gave the letter and the money to Dr. Fernandez, of Palos, to be transmitted to Columbus.

XXII.

Columbus, having bought a mule and taken a servant, departed from Granada, and was admitted to discuss his plans and conditions with Ferdinand's ministers.

"An obscure and unknown man," writes an eye-witness, "was then seen following the court, confounded by the splendours of the two crowns with the crowd of importunate petitioners, feeding his imagination in the corners of antechambers, with the pretentious project of discovering a world. Serious and downcast in the midst of the public joy, he saw with indifference the completion of this conquest of Grenada which filled a people and two courts with pride. The man was Christopher Columbus."

On this occasion the impediments came from Columbus's ignorance of the existence of the continent which he offered to discover, he wished, out of respect for the very greatness of the discovery which he was about to make to the world and to his sovereign, not to stipulate for himself and his descendants conditions other than those of his own mission, not of himself, but of his work.

In lacking legitimate pride, he would have thought himself as lacking in faith in God and falling short in the dignity of his mission.

palace opened at him, alone and neglected, he negotiated as the ruler of pos-
sibilities by the fervency of which he yet saw only in his dreams.

"Which, of her own accord," said Fernandez de Talevera, the president of the Marchioness's council, "makes the conditions of a king with kings." The Marchioness acted the title and privileges of admiral, the power and authority of a viceroy of all the lands which he should add to the projects of any of his discoveries and perpetual tithe, for himself and his posterity, of all the revenues of these possessions.

"Regular demands for an adventurer," cried his opponents, "which would confer on him in advance the right of a mule and a fleet and the possession of a vice-royalty without any support to the court. Juan if he succeeded in his enterprise, and which do not tie support his friend anything if he fails, since his present poverty has nothing to do with monetary assist."

The letter and the answer first men were astonished by these requirements, they submitted to Columbus by becoming indignant; he was offered conditions less onerous for the crown. From the depths of his poverty and nothingness he refused all. Wearied, but not conquered by ten years of trial, from the day when he grasped his idea and taken a servant, he offered it to the great powers of the world, he discussed his plans and have blushed to abate in anything the price of the gift God had made him.

"He," writes an eye-witness, "respectfully withdrew from the conferences with Ferdinand, confounded by the commissioners and, remounting the mule which the king of importunate people had given him, he again took, alone and destitute, the corners of antechamber Cordova from whence he intended to go into France. He was a world. Serious public joy, he set out on the occasion of this conference."

XXIII.

Two courts with pride, Isabella, on learning her protégé's departure, had, as it were, the sentiment of the great things which were leaving her for Columbus came from Columbus with this man of destiny. She was indignant with the king which he offered commissioners who, she cried, had haggled with God over the very greatness of the gift of an empire, and more than all, over the price of the world and to his sown of souls left in idolatry by their fault. The Marchioness's conditions, Maya, and Quintanilla, the Comptroller of the Queen's expenses, shared in and added poignancy to her remorse. Columbus had thought the King, more cool and calculating, hesitated; at a moment short in the dignity, the treasury was depleted the expense of the enterprise he sent him back.

"Well, then," cried Isabella, in a transport of enthusiasm ; "I take the enterprise upon myself alone for the personal crown of Castile. I will put my jewels and my lands in pawn to provide for the expense of the equipment."

The woman's impulse triumphed over the King's calculation, and, by a calculation more sublime than his, acquired a treasure in riches and territory for the two kingdoms. The disinterestedness inspired by enthusiasm is the true wisdom of great souls, and the true wisdom of great politicians.

The fugitive was quickly followed ; the messenger, whom the Queen sent to recall him, came up with him some miles from Granada, on the bridge of Pinos, a famous defile between two rocks, where Moors and Christians had often mingled their blood in the waters of a torrent that separated the two races.

Columbus, much affected, returned to throw himself at Isabella's feet. She obtained from King Ferdinand, on his knees and tears, the ratification of the conditions exacted by Columbus. In serving the forsaken cause of this great man, she was serving the cause of God himself, whose name was unknown to that portion of the human race which he was going to subdue to the faith. She saw the celestial kingdom in the acquisitions which her favourite was about to make for her empire ; while Ferdinand saw in them his terrestrial empire. As the soldier of Christianity in Spain and conqueror of the Moors, all the faithful whom he added to the belief of Christ were added to the number of his subjects by the Pope. Millions of men whom he was going to gather to Christ through the discoveries of this adventurer were given to him beforehand in full possession by the bulls of the court of Rome. Every man who was not a Christian was, in his eyes, a slave ; every portion of humanity that was not marked with the seal of Christ was not marked with the seal of man. Rome gave them away, or bartered them in the name of God, spiritual sovereignty on earth and in heaven.

Ferdinand was credulous enough, and at the same time politic enough to accept them.

The treaty between Ferdinand, Isabella, and the Genoese adventurer, who had arrived on foot at their court some years before, having no shelter but hospitality,

a transport of a monastery, was signed in the plain of Granada on April, 1492. upon myself alone, she took on herself alone, for the account of her kingdom, all the expenses of the expedition. It was not my jewels and the equipment. It was the one who was first to believe should risk the most over the King's enterprise; it was also right that the glory and reward of than his, acquire should be attached to her name before all others. the two kingdoms Columbus was assigned the little harbour of Palos, in of great politicians, as a centre of organisation for the expedition, and ; the messenger, with him some point of departure for his squadron. The idea con- with him some friends at their first meeting with Columbus, returned a famous defile whence it had started. The Prior of this monastery had often mingled with the preparations and to see, from his ge, the first sail of his friend spread itself to that that separated a world which they had seen together with the eye of and of faith.

XXIV.

hed to throw his King Ferdinand's ons exacted by Co s great man, she ous unforeseen and apparently insurmountable obstacles himself, whose na ood in the way of Isabella's favours and the accomplish- human race which Ferdinand's promises. Money was wanting in the royal saw the celestial k ; vessels employed on more urgent expeditions were ate was about to the Spanish ports ; sailors refused to enter into any them his terrestria ment for such a long and mysterious voyage, or deserted n and conqueror s they were recruited. d to the belief o seacoast towns, constrained by commands of the court subjects by the Po sh the ships, hesitated to obey and unrigged the vessels to gather to Chr n general opinion, were condemned to certain loss. turer were given dulty, terror, envy, derision, avarice and even revolt ulls of the court of hundred times, in the hands of Columbus and of the was, in his eyes, ri of the court themselves, the material means of execution at was not mark Isabella's favour had placed at his disposal. It seemed ith the seal of m tal genius, persistently striving against the genius of them in the name unity, wished to separate forever these two worlds, heaven. he dreams of a man, who stood alone, wished to unite. and at the sam mbus managed everything from his retreat at the mon- of Rabida, where his friend, Prior Juan Peres, had again him hospitality. Isabella, and this out the intervention and influence of this lowly monk, on foot at their but hospitality,

the appointed expedition would have again failed and all the orders of the court were either powerless or useless. The monk had recourse to his friends at Palos ; they gave him his word, his entreaties and advice.

Three brothers, rich mariners of Palos, the Pinzon brothers, themselves at last penetrated by the conviction and inspired the friend of Columbus. They thought they heard the voice of God in that of this aged recluse. They joined the enterprise, furnishing the money, equipping the ships, then called caravelles, engaging sailors from the ports of Palos and Moguer, and, in order at the same time to instigate, and give an example of confidence to the two of the three brothers, Martin Alonzo Pinzon and Vicente Pinzon resolved to embark and themselves command of their vessels.

Thanks to this generous assistance of the Pinzon brothers, or rather three barks, the Santa Maria, the Pinta, the Nina, were ready to go to sea on Friday, the 3d of August, 1492.

XXV.

At daybreak Columbus, accompanied to the beach by the Prior and the monks of Rabida who blessed his voyage, the sea, embraced his son whom he left in the caravel. Peres and boarded the largest of his ships, the Santa Maria. He hoisted his pennant as admiral of an unknown country as viceroy of an undiscovered country. The people of the two ports and the coast flocked in numberless crowds to the beach to be present at the departure, which popularly was thought to be without return. It was a mourning rather than a God speed for a happy voyage ; there was more of sadness than of hope, more tears than acclamations.

The mothers, wives and sisters of the sailors could not whisper this unlucky stranger who with his charmed words had beguiled the Queen's mind, and was taking in his hands the lives of so many men on the responsibility of a dream. Columbus, followed unwillingly like all men who lead the world across the line of their prejudices, entered the unknown with the sound of murmurings and maledictions. It is the nature of things human. All that outruns humanity, even when

have again failed de to its stock, be it a truth or be it a new world, makes
 other powerless or dur in complaint. Man is like the ocean, he has a
 nds at Palos ; they to motion and a natural gravitation towards repose.
 se two contrary tendencies is born the equilibrium of
 of Palos, the Pin : woe to him who destroys it :

the conviction and he
 They thought they
 recluse. They

XXVI.

the money, equip appearance of this flotilla, scarcely equal to a fishing or
 ging sailors from expedition, was in fitting contrast, in the eyes and
 n order at the sail the people, with the great destiny and the perils which
 confidence to theahly went to meet. Of the three barks, that alone was
 Alonzo Pinzon an which Columbus commanded. It was a small and
 k and themselves built trading vessel, already old and strained by the
 eas. The other two were undecked : a wave would
 ance of the Pinzen enough to swamp them. But the stern and prow
 Santa Maria, the barks, very high above the water like the ancient gal-
 a on Friday, the 3d two half-decks, the cavity of which gave shelter to the
 n rough weather, and prevented the weight of any wave
 ght ship from sinking the vessel. These barks were
 with two masts, one amidships, the other at the stern.

panied to the beast of these masts carried one large square sail ; the sec-
 who blessed his triangular lateen sail. Long oars, used but rarely and
 he left in the difficulty, fitted in calm weather to the low bulwarks amid-
 his ships, the Saand could, when necessary, give the ship some headway.
 of an unknown on these three barks, of unequal size, that Columbus
 ntry. The people the hundred and twenty men, who made up his crews,
 n numberless crow

re, which popular was the only one to embark with a calm face, a look of
 was a mourning pce, and a resolute heart. For the past eighteen years,
 py voyage ; there jectures had taken the shape of certainty in his mind.
 s than acclamation gh on this day he had passed more than half his life, and
 of the sailors cter ing his fifty-seventh year, he looked upon the years
 with his charmed : him as nothing ; in his eyes all his life was to come ; he
 was taking in his hin him the youth of hope, and the future of immortality.
 nsibility of a dre o take possession of these worlds towards which he set
 all men who leads, he wrote and published, when boarding his ship, a for-
 entered the unkne count of all the phases of mind and fortune that he had
 ctions. It is the enced in the conception and execution of his design ; he
 humanity, even wh the enumeration of all the titles, honours and commands,

with which he had just been invested by his sovereign for his future possessions, invoking Christ and mankind to witness his faith and bear witness to his constancy.

"It is for that," he said, in closing this proclamation, "that I condemn myself to death during this voyage, and until I have accomplished my things."

XXVII.

A favourable breeze, blowing off the coast of Europe, carried him gently to the Canaries, the last halting place for his sailors. While giving thanks to God for these omens, Columbus assisted in calming his crew, he would have preferred to have been carried forward by a full gale of wind, beyond the known and frequented latitudes. He had good reason to fear, that the sight of the distant coasts of Spain should, by the unbearable attraction's of one's country, call back the eyes and hearts of his irresolute and timid sailors, who still hesitated to go on board. In enterprises of great moment men must not be given time for reflection, or opportunities to doubt. Columbus knew it. He longed to pass the limit of the travelled sea, and to hold himself alone, in the secret of his course and of his charts and compass, the possibility of which was his impatience to lose sight of the shores of the old world was only too well-founded. One of his ships, the *Pinta*, the rudder of which was broken, and which was making no way, the hold, compelled him to touch at the Canaries, to change himself, to change this vessel for another. He lost about three weeks in these ports, without being able to find a ship for his long voyage. He was obliged to satisfy himself simply repairing the *Pinta* and giving another set of sails to the *Nina*, his third convoy, a heavy and slow bark that delayed progress. He renewed his supply of water and provisions. His small undecked ships allowed him to carry food for a hundred and twenty men for a certain number of days.

After leaving the Canaries, the appearance of the volcano of Teneriffe, an eruption of which lit up the sky and reflected in the sea, struck terror to the souls of his sailors. They thought they saw the flaming sword of the angel that drove the first man from Eden, prohibiting the children of

ed by his sovereign and mankind to sur-
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an entry to forbidden lands and seas. The admiral
 m ship to ship to dispel this vulgar panic, and to
 scientifically to these ignorant men the physical laws
 phenomenon. But the disappearance of the peak of
 when it sank beneath the horizon, impressed them
 deep a sadness as its crater had inspired them with fear.
 or them the last milestone and the last lighthouse of
 World. In losing sight of it, they thought they had
 very landmarks of their course across an incommensur-
 ce. They felt themselves, as it were, detached from
 and sailing in the ether of another planet. General
 on of mind and body took hold of them. They were
 ctres who have lost even their tomb. The admiral
 sembled them around him on his ship, raised their
 y the energy of his own, and abandoning himself, as
 t of the unknown, to the eloquent inspiration of his
 described, as if he had already lived in them, the lands,
 and seas, the kingdoms and riches, the vegetation and
 ate, the mines of gold, the shores sanded with pearls,
 untains glittering with precious stones, the plains
 d with spices that grew ready to his hand on the
 le of this expanse, each wave of which carried their
 wards these marvels and this bliss. These pictures,
 in the fascinating colours of their leader's rich imagina-
 oxicated and raised their drooping hearts; while the
 nds, blowing steadily and gently from the east, seemed
 the impatience of the sailors. The distance alone could
 rth frighten them. Columbus, to spare them a portion
 ace across which he was leading them, deducted every
 a his calculation of nautical miles a part of the distance
 d, and so deceived the imagination of his commanders
 ors by half the journey. He secretly noted the true log
 elf alone, so that he also might alone have the know-
 the tale of billows he had crossed and the reckonings
 wished to keep secret from his rivals. The crews, in
 uded by the steady breeze and the peaceful oscillation
 ars, thought they were slowly floating on in the further
 f Europe.

XXVIII.

He would have wished equally to conceal from the sailors the phenomenon that, two hundred leagues from Tenochtitlan, he founded his own knowledge ; this was the variation of the magnetic needle in the compass, their last and, according to them, infallible guide, which itself wavered on the threshold of the travelled hemisphere. For some days he kept the matter in doubt to himself ; but his pilots, as observant of the sky as he, soon perceived these variations. Seized by the same astonishment, but less firm than their leader in the resolution to set nature herself at defiance, they too were very elements were troubled or changed their laws under the land of infinite space.

The vertigo, which they supposed in nature, passed into the souls. Pale from fear they told each other their doubts, abandoning the ships to the hazards of the winds and the stars, the only guides that remained to them in the future. The sailors were thus disheartened all the sailors.

Columbus, who sought in vain to explain to himself the mystery, for the reason of which the science of to-day has had recourse to that powerful imagination, his hypothesis of the compass of the mind. He invented an explanation, a deed, but specious for uncultivated minds, to account for the variations of the magnetic needle. He attributed the stars circling round the pole, the movements of the firmament the needle alternately followed by attraction and repulsion, an explanation, being in conformity with the astrological explanations of the time, satisfied the pilots, and their credulity, the faith of the sailors. The sight of a heron and a crane, a bird, which, on the following day, came hovering round the masts of the flotilla, effected for their senses what the explanation had effected for their minds. These things, the plants of the earth could not exist on an ocean without plants and fresh water. They seemed to them two proofs to prove the truth of the visions of Columbus before the witness of their eyes. They sailed with more confidence and assurance of a bird. The mild, equal, and genial breeze of this part of the ocean, the clearness of the sky, the serenity of the waves, the play of the dolphins round the ships,

month of the air, the perfumes which the billows bring
 ar and seem to exhale from their foam, the brighter
 to conceal from the constellations and stars in the night, all seemed, in
 leagues from Tenerifides, to fill the senses with repose and the soul with
 was the variation on. They breathed the promise of the still invisible
 last and, according to them. They recalled the bright days, the well-known stars,
 ed on the threshold of the spring twilights of Andalusia.
 days he kept the "nightingale," wrote Columbus, "was alone wanting."

XXIX.

had begun to bear its presages. Unknown plants
 floated on the waves. Some, say the historians of
 voyage, were marine plants that only grow in the shall-
 er near the shore; others, rock-growing plants which
 must have torn from the rocks; others again, of river
 some of them, newly detached from their roots, re-
 ce the verdure of their sap; one of them bore a living crab,
 hat had embarked on a tuft of grass. These plants
 g things could not have passed many days on the water
 lying or being withered.

to explain to himself the science of to-day
 science of to-day of a species that does not alight on the waves, and
 imagination, his heps on the water, crossed the sky. Whence did it
 nted an explanation Where was it going? Could its sleeping place be far
 ted minds, to accept Further on, the ocean changed in temperature and
 le. He attributed indications of varying depths; in another place, it re-
 e movements of wimmense marine prairies, with weed-covered billows,
 followed by attracre mown by the prow and lessened their headway;
 with the astrological and morning, far off mists, such as those that hang
 and their credulity rlofty peaks of the globe, assumed the forms of shores
 of a heron and of tains on the horizon. The cry of land was on every
 lay, came hovering imbus neither wished excessively to encourage, or to
 their senses what thpes that served his purposes in reviving the spirits of
 their minds. These nions; but he did not think he was more than three
 st on an ocean wiles from Teneriffe, and, according to his conjectures,
 eemed to them two only find the land he looked for seven or eight hun-
 Columbus before tdes further on.

XXX.

equal, and genial kept his conjectures to himself alone, being without
 earnestness of the sky, amongst his companions, of courage strong enough to
 the dolphins round

equal his in constancy, or reliable enough to guard his secret apprehensions. He had no conversation on this long voyage, except with his own thoughts, the stars and God, whose confidant he felt himself to be. Almost without sleep, as he had said in his proclamation of farewell to the old world, he passed his days in his cabin at the stern, marking in characters known to himself only, the degrees, latitudes and distances which he thought he had crossed; he passed his nights on the bridge, by the side of his pilots, studying the stars and watching the sea. Almost constantly alone, like Moses leading the people of God in the desert, impressing his companions by his thoughtful gravity, now with respect, now with mistrust, now with terror, that kept them apart from him; isolation or remoteness which is almost invariably seen in men of thought, or resolution superior to their fellows, whether it is that these inspired men of genius require more solitude and meditation for self communing, or whether the inferior men, whom they intimidate, do not like to approach them, for fear of measuring themselves with such high natures, and feeling their own littleness before these moral grandeurs of creation.

XXXI.

Yet the land so often presaged showed itself only in the mirages seen by the sailors; each morning dissipated before the prows of the vessel the fantastic horizons that the evening mist had caused them to mistake for the shore.

They ever plunged forward as if in a boundless and bottomless abyss.

Even the regularity and constancy of the east wind that favoured their course, so that they had not to trim their sails once during these many days, was a cause of anxiety to them. They began to believe that this wind prevailed the same forever in this part of the great ocean that was the girdle of the globe, and that, after bearing them so easily towards the west, it would be an insurmountable obstacle to their return. How could they ever come back through these contrary wind currents except by tacking in this great expanse? And if they were obliged to beat back in never ending tacks to find the shores of the old world, how would their supplies of water and provisions,

already half consumed, suffice for the long months of their return voyage? What would save them from the horrible prospect of death from thirst and hunger in their long struggle with these winds that drove them from their harbours? Many began to count the number of days and of rations unequal to the days, to murmur against the ever deceived obstinacy of their chief, and to reproach, in whispers, a perseverance in devotion that sacrificed the lives of a hundred and twenty men to the madness of one.

But every time that the murmuring was about to develop into sedition, Providence seemed to send them more convincing and unexpected presages to change them into hopes. So, on the 20th September, these favourable winds, which were alarming in their fixedness, changed and went round to the south-west. The sailors hailed the change, although against their course, as a sign of life and mobility in the elements, which a quiver of wind in their sails made known to them. In the evening, small birds of the weaker kinds, that make their nests in the shrubs and orchards at home, hovered twittering round the masts. Their delicate wings and joyous chirpings did not betray in them any trace of weariness or fright, as is seen in flocks of birds when carried by a gust of wind, in spite of themselves, far out to sea. Their songs like those which the sailors used to hear round their yoke-elm hedges, and in the myrtles, and orange groves of Andalusia, recalled their country to them and invited them to neighbouring shores. They recognised the sparrows that always nest in the eaves. Thicker and greener grasses on the surface of the waves reproduced fields and meadows before the reaping of the grain. Vegetation hidden beneath the water appeared before the land, charming the eyes of the sailors wearied of the eternal azure of the sea.

But the grasses soon became so thick that they feared their rudder and keel would be clogged by them and that they would be held prisoners in these rushes of the ocean, like vessels in the north sea by the ice. So each joy turned quickly into tears: such terror has the unknown for the soul of man! Columbus, like a guide seeking his course among these mysteries of the ocean, was obliged in appearance to understand what astonished even him, and to invent an explanation for each surprise of his sailors.

XXXII.

The calms of the Equator threw them into consternation ; if everything, even to the wind, died in these latitudes, what would give the breeze to their sails and motion to their ships ? Suddenly, without wind, the sea began to swell ; they attributed it to subterranean convulsions in its bed.

An immense whale appeared sleeping on the bosom of the waves ; in imagination they saw monsters devouring the ships. The undulation of the billows carried them into currents from which they could not escape for lack of wind ; they fancied they were approaching the cataracts of the sea, and that they were about to be dragged into the abysses and reservoirs where the deluge had emptied its worlds of waters.

They stood gloomily, in angry groups, at the foot of the masts ; they murmured together more openly ; they spoke of compelling the pilots to put about, of throwing the admiral into the sea, as a madman who only left his companions the choice between suicide and murder. Columbus, to whom their glances and mutterings revealed these conspiracies, defied them by his attitude or frustrated them by his confidence.

Nature came to his help with refreshing winds new-blowing from the east, while she smoothed the sea beneath his prows. Before the end of the day Alonzo Pinzon, who commanded the Pinta, and who sailed near enough to the admiral to be able to talk with him alongside, gave the first cry of " Land ! " from the summit of the poop. All the crews, taking up this cry of safety, life and triumph, threw themselves on their knees on the decks and burst forth with the hymn, " Glory to God in heaven and on the earth ! " This religious chant, the first hymn that ascended to the Creator from the bosom of this young ocean, rolled slowly over the waves ; when it had ceased, all climbed to the masts, to the tops and to the highest rigging of the vessels to take possession with their own eyes of the shore dimly seen by Pinzon to the south-west. Columbus alone doubted, but he was too willing to believe, to contradict, alone, the frenzy of his crews.

Although he only looked for the land of his expectation toward the west, he allowed them to steer south during the whole night, preferring to lose a portion of his progress to please his

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companions than to lose the passing popularity due to their illusion, which sunrise only too quickly dissipated. The imaginary land of Pinzon had vanished with the mists of night, and the admiral resumed the course towards the west dictated by his visions.

XXXIII.

The ocean had again smoothed its surface, where the sun mirrored itself, cloudless and clear, as in another sky. The caressing waves crowned the prow with fairy foam ; the dolphins, now more numerous, bounded in the wake ; the whole sea seemed full of life ; the fishes flew, sprang up and fell back upon the decks of the vessels. Everything in nature seemed to join with Columbus to entice with returning hope his sailors who forgot the flight of time. On the first of October they fancied they had only made six hundred leagues beyond the latitudes frequented by their brethren ; the secret log of the admiral indicated eight hundred miles. Yet all the signs of land being near at hand increased about them, but there was no land visible on the horizon. Fear again took possession of their souls. Columbus himself, beneath his apparent calmness, was troubled by some doubt ; he feared that he had passed through the islands of an archipelago without seeing them, and that leaving behind him the extreme point of Asia which he sought for, he was now astray in a third ocean. The swiftest of his barks, the *Nina*, which sailed as an advance guard, on the 7th October at length hoisted her flag of discovery and fired a shot of triumph to proclaim land to the two other vessels. On drawing near, they saw that the *Nina* had been deceived by a cloud.

The wind, on bearing it into the air, bore away their short-lived joy that turned to consternation. Nothing so wearies the heart of man as these alternations of counterfeit joys and bitter deceptions, which are the sarcasms of fortune. Censure of the admiral was again seen openly in every face. It was no longer only their hardships and dissensions that the crews imputed to their leader, it was their lives sacrificed without hope. They were running short of bread and water.

Columbus, confounded by the immensity of this expanse, the limits of which he thought he was reaching at last, abandoned

the visionary course that he had traced upon his chart, and for two days and two nights followed the flight of the birds, heavenly pilots that Providence seemed to send to him at the moment when human knowledge failed. He said to himself that the instinct of these birds would not direct them all to that particular point of the horizon if they did not see land there. But the very birds seemed, in the eyes of the sailors, to have an understanding with the desert of the ocean and the deceitful stars, to make sport of their vessels and their lives. At the end of the third day, the pilots who had climbed the shrouds at the hour when the setting sun most clearly reveals the horizon, saw it plunge into the same waves from which it had risen in vain for so many mornings.

They believed in the boundlessness of the waters. The despair that weighed them down changed into sullen anger. Why should they now use forbearance with a leader who had deceived the court, and whose titles and authority, obtained unfairly from the confiding nature of his sovereigns, were about to perish with his illusions?

To follow him longer, was it not to associate in his crime? Did not obedience end where the world ended? Was there any other hope, if hope remained, than to turn their prows towards Europe, to struggle by tacking against these winds, the admiral's accomplices, and to chain him to the mast to be an object for the curses of the dying if they must die, or to hand him over to the vengeance of Spain if heaven ever permitted them to see her harbours?

These mutterings had become an outcry. The intrepid admiral restrained them by the calmness of his face. He invoked against the seditious an authority sacred to subjects, that of their sovereigns with which he was invested. He even called on heaven, now the judge between them and him. He did not bend, he offered his life as pledge for his promises; he asked them only, in the tone of a prophet who sees what common men see only through his mind, to postpone for three days their incredulity and their resolution to return. He made an oath, an oath rash indeed, but politic, that if in the course of the third day land was not visible on the horizon, he would give way to their entreaties and take them back to Europe. The indications that revealed the neighbourhood of islands or continents were

so clear in the admiral's eyes, that in begging these three days from his mutinous crews he thought himself sure to lead them to the goal. He tempted God in setting a period to his revelation, but he had to manage men. The sailors, unwillingly, granted him these three days, and God, who was his inspiration, did not punish him for excessive hope.

XXXIV.

At sunrise, on the second day, newly uprooted rushes appeared round the vessels. A plank wrought by an axe, a stick artistically chiselled by some sharp instrument, a branch of hawthorn in flower, and, lastly, a bird's nest hanging to a branch broken off by the wind, filled with eggs on which the mother was still sitting to the gentle rocking of the waves, floated in succession on the water. The sailors took on board these written, speaking, or living witnesses of a neighbouring land. They were the voices of the coast confirming the word of Columbus. Before looking on the land with their eyes, they inferred its existence from these indications of life.

The mutinous fell on their knees before the admiral, whom they had insulted the day before : imploring him to pardon their mistrust, and pouring forth a hymn of gratitude to God, who had associated them with his triumph.

Night fell on these songs of the Church that hailed a New World. The admiral ordered them to clew up the sails, to heave the lead before the ships, and to sail slowly, fearing the shallows and rocks, and being convinced that the first streaks of dawn would reveal land under the prows of the vessels. No one slept on this momentous night. Impatience of mind had taken away all need of sleep from their eyes. The pilots and sailors, hanging to the masts, to the yards, to the shrouds, competed with each other in position and vigilance to be the first to sight the new hemisphere. A prize had been promised by the admiral to the man who should be the first to cry, Land ! if land really seen should verify his discovery. Providence, however, reserved for Columbus himself this first look, which he had bought at the price of twenty years of his life and so much constancy and danger. As he was walking alone at midnight on the poop of his vessel, piercing the darkness with his eyes,

a glimmer of fire passed him, went out, and passed again before his eyes, on a level with the waves. Fearing that he was deceived by dizziness, or by the phosphorescence of the sea, he called in a whisper to a Spanish gentleman of Isabella's court, named Gutierrez, in whom he had more faith than in his pilots. With his hand he indicated the point of the horizon where he had seen a fire, and asked him if he did not perceive a light in that quarter. Gutierrez answered that he did, in fact, see a fleeting gleam of light sparkle in that direction. Columbus, the further to confirm his conviction, summoned Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, another of his confidants. Sanchez did not hesitate any more than Gutierrez in reporting a brightness on the horizon. But scarcely had this fire shown itself than it disappeared, to reappear in successive emergings from the ocean, whether it was a flame of a hearth on a low beach, hidden and revealed by turns by the undulating horizon of the great billows, or whether it was the floating lantern of a fishing canoe, alternately raised on the crest and swallowed in the hollows of the waves. Thus land and life appeared at the same time to Columbus and his two friends in the form of fire, during the night of the 11th to the 12th of October, 1492.

Columbus, enjoining silence on Rodrigo and Gutierrez, kept the sight to himself, for fear of again giving fictitious joy and a bitter deception to his crews. He lost sight of the gleam that was now extinguished, but kept watch, until two o'clock in the morning, alone upon the bridge, in prayer, hoping and despairing between the triumph and the retreat which the morrow was to decide.

XXXV.

He was plunged in the agony that precedes mighty revelations of truth, as the final agony precedes the grand delivery of the soul by death, when the report of a cannon, ringing across the ocean some hundreds of fathoms before him, burst like the roar of a world upon his ears, making him start and fall upon his knees on the poop. It was the cry of Land! hurled by the cannon, the signal agreed with the *Pinta*, which sailed at the head of the fleet to take soundings and show the way. At this report, a universal cry of Land! burst from all the yards and rigging of the vessels. They furled the sails and waited for the dawn.

The mystery of the ocean had spoken its first word in the depths of the night ; the day was about to reveal it in its entirety to their eyes. The sweetest and strangest perfumes came in gusts to the ships, together with the shadow of a coast line, the sound of the waves upon the reefs and the wind blowing from the land.

The fire seen by Columbus indicated the presence of man and the first element of civilisation. Never did night seem slower in unveiling the horizon ; for that horizon was for the companions of Columbus and for himself a second creation of God.

XXXVI.

As the dawn spread upwards, the form of an island stood out little by little from the sea. Its two extremities were lost in the morning mist. Its low coast rose in an amphitheatre to the summits of the hills, the dark verdure of which contrasted with the limpid blue of the sky ; a few steps from the foam of the waves that died away on the yellow sand, forests of majestic trees, unknown to Europeans, stretched upward in steps on the successive ledges of the island. Green coves and luminous glades in the background let the eye half-fathom these mysteries of solitude. They caught a glimpse of scattered dwellings, which, from their round shape and roofs of dry leaves, were like human bee-hives.

Smoke rose above the tree tops here and there. Groups of men, women, and children, more astonished than frightened, appeared half naked among the trees nearest the beach, advancing timidly and retiring by turns, while they manifested, by their gestures and artless attitudes, as much fear as curiosity and admiration at the sight of these ships and strangers, who were brought to them in the night by the waves.

XXXVII.

Columbus, after a silent contemplation of this first shore, the outpost of the land so often fashioned in his dreams and so magnificently coloured in his imagination, found it even superior to his conception. He burned with impatience to imprint the first European foot-mark on this sand, and to hoist

there, in the sign of the cross and the flag of Spain, the standard of God's and his sovereign's conquest achieved through the instrumentality of his genius. But he restrained, both in himself and his crews this haste to land, wishing to give to this taking possession of a new world the solemnity of what was perhaps the greatest deed ever accomplished by a seaman, and to call, in the absence of men, God and the angels, the sea, the earth and the heavens as witnesses to his triumph over the unknown. He put on all the decorations of his rank as admiral and as viceroy of the future Empires ; he displayed his purple cloak, and, taking in his right hand the banner embroidered with a cross in which the monograms of Ferdinand and Isabella, interwoven like their kingdoms, were surmounted by their crown, he entered his long boat and advanced towards the beach, followed by the boats of his lieutenants, Alonzo and Yanes Pinzon. On touching land, he fell on his knees to consecrate, by an act of humility and adoration, the gift and greatness of God in this new portion of his handiwork. He kissed the sand, shedding tears as his forehead touched the ground, tears of double meaning and twofold augury, that, for the first time, moistened the clay of this hemisphere now visited by men from ancient Europe ! Tears of joy for Columbus, that overflowed from a proud heart in gratitude and piety ! Tears of mourning for that virgin earth, seeming to foreshadow for it calamities, devastation and fire, steel, blood and death, which these strangers brought to it, together with their pride, knowledge, and dominion ! The man, indeed, shed tears ; for the land there was the wailing to come.

XXXVIII.

"Almighty and everlasting God," said Columbus, as he raised his forehead from the dust, in a Latin prayer that has been preserved for us by his companions :

"O God, who, by the power of thy creating word, hast made the firmament, the sea, and the land ! may thy name be everywhere blessed and glorified ! May thy majesty and universal dominion be exalted from age to age, who hast permitted the most humble of thy servants, in this division of thy kingdom hidden from us till now, to make known and spread abroad thy holy name."

He then christened this island San Salvador, from the name of Christ.

His lieutenants, his pilots and sailors, intoxicated with joy and imbued with veneration, as for a god, for him who for their benefit had penetrated beyond the visible horizon, and whom they had insulted by their distrust on the previous day, subdued by the evidence and crushed by that superiority which prostrates man, fell at the admiral's feet, kissing his hands and clothes and recognizing, for a moment, the sovereignty and almost the divinity of genius. Yesterday the victims of his steadfastness, to-day the companions of his constancy, and resplendent in the glory that they had just blasphemed.

Thus it is with humanity, which persecutes its leaders while inheriting their conquests.

XXXIX.

During the ceremony of taking possession, the inhabitants of the island at first kept at a distance, by fear, and then attracted by that instinct of curiosity which is the first bond that draws men together, had come nearer.

They discussed amongst themselves the marvelous sights of this night and morning. These vessels working their sails, their lateen and sail yards, like immense limbs folding and unfolding at the impulse of an inward thought, had seemed to them to be living and supernatural beings who, during the darkness, had come down from the crystal firmament that surrounded their horizon; heavenly inhabitants floating on their wings and alighting at pleasure on the shores of which they were the gods. Moved by veneration at the sight of the boats that touched their island, and of the men wearing brilliant stuffs and armour flashing in the sun, they had at last drawn near, as if fascinated by their omnipotence.

They adored and prayed to them with the artlessness of children who do not suspect evil in that which charms them. The Spaniards, examining them in their turn, were astonished at finding in these islanders none of the physical characteristics of form and colour of the African, Asiatic, or European races that they were accustomed to meet. Their copper colour, their silky hair spreading in waves over their shoulders, their eyes

dark as their sea, their soft and delicate features, their open and trusting faces ; lastly, their nudity, and the coloured designs with which they dyed their limbs, revealed in them a race, quite distinct from the human families dispersed over the ancient hemisphere, still retaining the simplicity and charms of childhood, forgotten for centuries in these unknown recesses of the world, where they had retained, by very force of ignorance, the artlessness, candour, and sweetness of early days.

Columbus, being persuaded that this island was a peninsula jutting out into the Indian ocean, towards which he still thought he was sailing, wrongly gave them the name of Indians, which, through an error in words that has outlived the sailors' error, they have retained until their extinction.

XL.

Soon the Indians, familiarizing themselves with their guests, showed them their springs of water, their dwellings, villages and canoes. They brought them as tribute their nutritious fruits and cassava bread, which replenished the Spaniards' provisions, also some ornaments of pure gold that hung from their ears and nostrils, or as bracelets or collars round the necks and legs of their women. They were ignorant of trade and of the use of money, that base but necessary adjunct to the virtue of hospitality ; they received in exchange, with rapture, the most trifling and ordinary European articles. In their eyes the novelty gave value to everything. Rare and precious is the rule all the world over. The Spaniards, who explored the country for gold and precious stones, found out by signs the places from which that metal came. The Indians pointed to the south, and the admiral and his companions surmised that there was in that direction an island or a continent of India, answering by its richness and arts to the marvelous stories of the Venetian, Marco Polo. This land, to which they thought they were already near, was, according to them, the fabulous island of Cipangu, or Japan, the sovereign of which walked on floors formed of slabs of gold. Their impatience to resume their course towards this goal of their fancy or their greed soon made them re-embark. They were provisioned with fresh water from the island streams, and their decks were loaded with fruits, roots and cassavas, gifts

from these poor and happy Indians, one of whom they took with them to learn their language and act as interpreter.

XLI.

On rounding the island of San Salvador, they found themselves as if lost in the channels of an archipelago composed of more than a hundred islands of unequal size, but all with a most luxuriant appearance of youth, fertility, and vegetation. They touched at the largest and most populous, where they were surrounded by canoes hollowed from single trees, and traded with the inhabitants, giving buttons and little bells in exchange for gold and pearls. Their sailings and stoppages amid this labyrinth of unknown islands was for them only a repetition of their landing at San Salvador. The same inoffensive curiosity greeted them everywhere. They were intoxicated by the climate, flowers and perfumes, the colours and the plumages of the strange birds, which each one of these oases offered to their senses; but their mind, interested in one thought alone—the discovery of the land of gold, in what they supposed to be the extreme point of Asia—rendered them less sensible to these natural treasures, and prevented them from suspecting the existence of a new and immense continent, or which these islands were the advance guards on the ocean. From the direction of the Indians' eyes and their signs, which pointed to a region even more magnificent than their archipelago, Columbus sailed towards the coast of Cuba, where he landed after a pleasant run of three days, without losing sight of the charming islands of the Bahamas that marked out his course.

Cuba, with its terraced coasts stretching without end, backed by mountains that cleaved the sky, with its harbours, the mouths of its rivers, its gulfs and bays, forests and villages, recalled to him, in even grander features, the Old World Sicily. He remained undecided as to whether it was a continent or an island. He cast anchor in the shady bed of a great river, and, having landed, explored the beach, forests, orange and palm gardens, villages and huts of the inhabitants. A dumb dog was the only living thing that he found in these dwellings, deserted at his approach. He re-

embarked, and with his vessels ascended the channel of the river which was shaded by large-leaved palms and giant trees covered with fruit and flowers. Nature seemed to have taken care to lavish spontaneously on these happy tribes the elements of a life of felicity without labour. Everything recalled the Eden of the Bible and of poetry. Harmless animals, birds of blue and purple plumage ; parrots, wood-peckers, and humming-birds darted from branch to branch, with cry and song, a very haze of colour ; luminous insects dazzled the air itself ; the sun, tempered by the breeze from the mountains, by the shade of the trees and by the running streams, fertilized all there, without parching ; the moon and the stars mirrored themselves, during the darkness, in the bed of the stream, with splendours and flashes of soft light that robbed night of its terrors. A general intoxication exalted the souls and senses of Columbus and his companions. This was indeed a new earth, at once more virgin and more endearing than the Old World from which they had come.

"It is the most beauteous island," writes Columbus in his notes, "that the eye of man has ever looked upon. One would wish to live on it forever, for neither sorrow nor death are conceivable there."

The odour of spices that reached his vessels from the interior, and the discovery of pearl-bearing oysters on the shore, persuaded him more and more that Cuba was a prolongation of Asia. He fancied that behind the mountains of this island, or this continent—for he was still uncertain whether Cuba was or was not connected with the mainland—he would find the empires, the civilization, the gold mines, and the marvels with which enthusiastic travellers endowed Cathay and Japan. Not being able to meet with the natives, who all fled from the coast on the approach of the Spaniards, he sent two of his companions, one of whom spoke Hebrew and the other Arabic, to seek for these fabulous capitals, where he thought the sovereign of Cathay made his residence. These envoys were laden with presents for the natives ; they were ordered to exchange them only for gold, the inexhaustible supply of which they thought was in the interior of this land. The messengers returned to the vessels without having discovered any other capital than the huts of savages, and a nature prodigal of vegetation, per-

fumes, flowers and fruits. They had succeeded, by means of presents, in overcoming the shyness of some of the natives, and brought them back with them to the admiral. Tobacco, a slightly intoxicating plant, of which the inhabitants made small roils, lighting the ends of them to inhale the smoke; the potato, a farinaceous root which turned into ready-made bread in the ashes; maize, cotton spun by the women, oranges, lemons, and the strange fruits of their orchards, were the only treasures that they had discovered around the dwellings that were scattered, in groups, through the openings of the forests.

Disappointed in his expectations of gold, the admiral, trusting to the directions of the natives, whom he misunderstood, regretfully quitted this enchanting abode to turn his course to the east, where he still placed his fabulous Asia. He took on board some men and women from Cuba who were bolder and more confiding than the others to serve him as interpreters in the neighbouring countries that he proposed to visit, to convert them to the true faith, and to offer Isabella these souls redeemed, according to him, by her noble enterprise. Being persuaded that Cuba, the limits of which he had not seen, formed a portion of the continent of Asia, he sailed for some days at a short distance from the real continent of America, without perceiving it. His obstinate illusion hid from him a reality so near his prow. Meanwhile envy, which was to poison his life, had sprung into existence in the minds of his companions on the very day when his discoveries had crowned the dream of his whole life.

Amerigo Vespucci, an obscure Florentine, who had embarked on one of his ships, was to give his name to this world towards which Columbus alone had guided him. Vespucci only owed this good fortune of his name to chance and his subsequent voyages with Columbus in the same latitudes. A subaltern lieutenant, devoted to the admiral, he never sought to rob him of this glory. A whim of fortune gave it to him, without his ever seeking to deceive the judgment of Europe, and custom retained it. The name of the leader being deprived of the honour of naming a world, the name of the subordinate prevailed—a mockery of human glory, of which Columbus was the victim, but for which Amerigo, at least, was not to blame. Posterity may be reproached with injustice and ingratitude, but

the lucky Florentine sailor cannot be charged with wilful misappropriation.

XLII.

But envy, which is born in the hearts of men on the same day as success, was already burning the heart of the principal lieutenant of Columbus, Alonzo Pinzon. Commanding the *Pinta*, the second ship of the squadron, Pinzon, whose sails easily outstripped the two other vessels, pretended to lose his way during the night and disappeared from the sight of his leader. He had resolved to profit by the discovery of Columbus, to discover for himself other lands, without genius and without effort, and, after having given them his name, to return the first to Europe to usurp the brightness of renown and the recompenses due to his master and his leader on the voyage. Columbus had for some days only too clearly seen the envy and insubordination of his lieutenant. But he owed much to Alonzo Pinzon; without him and without his encouragement and assistance at Palos, he would never have succeeded in fitting out his ship and getting his sailors. Gratitude had prevented him from punishing the first insubordinate acts of a man from whom he had received so much.

The tolerant, unpresuming and magnanimous disposition of Columbus dissuaded him from all excessive harshness. Full of impartiality and goodness, he expected goodness and impartiality from others in return. This kindness, which Alonzo Pinzon had taken for feebleness, encouraged him in his ingratitude. He boldly threw himself between Columbus and the new discoveries that he had resolved to snatch from his grasp.

XLIII.

The admiral grieved as he forecasted the crime, while affecting to believe the *Pinta's* change of course to be involuntary; he sailed south-east with his two ships towards a great shadow that he saw upon the sea, and landed upon the island of Hispaniola, since called St. Domingo. Without this cloud around the mountains of St. Domingo, which made him put about, he was once more in the way of finding the continent.

The American archipelago, by enticing and leading him from

island to island, seemed to turn him at pleasure from the goal to which he was so close without perceiving it.

That phantom of Asia, which had led him to the threshold of America, now interposed between America and him, to rob him of the great reality by a chimera.

XLIV.

This new and laughing earth, fertile and vast, bathed in a crystal atmosphere, and washed by a sea, the waves of which bore perfumes, seemed to him the marvelous island, detached from the continent of India, that he sought for across such distances and through such perils, under the fanciful name of the island of Cipangu. He gave it the name of Hispaniola, to brand it forever with the mark of the country of his adoption. The natives, simple, gentle and hospitable, open and respectful, hastened in a crowd to the shore, as if to meet beings of a higher nature, whom a celestial prodigy sent to them from the bounds of the horizon, or the depths of the firmament, to be adored and served as the equals of the gods. A numerous and happy population then covered the plains and valleys of Hispaniola. The men and women were types of strength and beauty.

The perpetual peace that reigned among their tribes stamped their faces with an impression of sweetness and good-will. Their laws were only the kindly instincts of the heart, passed into traditions and customs. One would have said a people in its infancy, whose vices had not yet had time to develop, and whom the promptings of an innocent nature sufficed to govern. They understood agriculture, horticulture and as much of the arts as is necessary for government, for the family and for the first necessities of life. Their fields were admirably cultivated, their huts tasty and grouped in villages on the edge of forests of fruit trees, in the neighbourhood of rivers or springs.

Their clothing, in a warm climate which did not subject them to the extremes of winter or summer, consisted only of ornaments intended to beautify them, cotton stuffs, matting and girdles sufficient to veil their nakedness.

Their government was as simple and natural as their ideas. It was the family enlarged by the succession of generations, but

always grouped round a hereditary chief whom they called the Cazique. The Caziques were the leaders, not the tyrants of their tribe. Custom, an unwritten constitution, but inviolable and protecting as a divine law, ruled these petty kings. An authority quite paternal on one side, quite filial on the other, revolt against which seemed unknown!

The natives of Cuba, whom Columbus had embarked with him to serve as guides and interpreters on these seas and islands began to understand the language of the Europeans; they partly understood that of the inhabitants of Hispaniola, a detached branch of the same human family; they thus established a prompt and easy means of communication between Columbus and the people whom he came to visit.

XLV.

The so-called Indians led the Spaniards without suspicion to their houses, offering them cassava bread, strange fruits, fishes and savoury roots, tame birds of magnificent plumage and melodious song, flowers and palms, bananas and lemons, all the gifts of the sea, the sky, the earth and the climate.

They treated them as guests and brothers, almost as gods.

"Nature," says Columbus, "is so lavish there, that property has not created feelings of avarice or cupidity. These men seem to live in a golden age, happy and peaceful in the midst of their open and boundless gardens, which are neither surrounded by ditches, divided by palisades, or protected by walls. They act honestly towards each other, without laws, books or judges. They look upon him as a wicked man who takes pleasure in doing wrong to another. This horror of the good for the wicked seems to sum up their whole legislation."

Their religion also was but a sentiment of inferiority, gratitude and love to the invisible being who had been bountiful to them in their life and happiness.

What a contrast between the state of these happy peoples at the moment when the Europeans discover them to bring them the genius of the old world, and the state into which these unhappy Indians fell a few years after this visit of their pretended civilizers! What a mystery of Providence is this unexpected visit of Columbus to a new world, to which he thinks he is

bringing virtue and new life, and where he is sowing, unknown to himself, tyranny and death !

XLVI.

The pilot of Columbus, in endeavouring to penetrate successively into all the creeks and river mouths of the island, ran aground while the admiral was asleep. The vessel, threatened with submergence by the roaring waves, was abandoned by the pilot and some of the sailors who, on the pretext of taking an anchor ashore, took flight in order to reach another ship by dint of rowing, thinking that Columbus was condemned to certain death.

The admiral's energy again saved, not the ship, but his companions. He fought against the breakers until the dismemberment of the last plank, and, placing his men on a raft, landed as a shipwrecked man on that coast where he had recently landed as a conqueror. He was soon joined by the only vessel that remained to him.

His shipwreck and misfortune did not cool the hospitality of the Cazique whose guest he had been some days before. The Cazique, named Quacanagari, the first friend and soon to be the first victim of these strangers, shed tears of compassion over the disaster of Columbus. He offered his dwelling, his provisions and his assistance, in every way, to the Spaniards. The fragments of the wreck and the riches of the Europeans, snatched from the waves and spread on the beach, were preserved there, as holy things, from all violation and even from all importunate curiosity. These men who did not understand the meaning of property amongst themselves, seemed to recognize and respect it in their unfortunate guests. Columbus, in his letters to the King and Queen, showed himself to be deeply touched by the spontaneous generosity of this people.

"There is not in the universe," he writes, "a better nation or a better country. They love their neighbours as themselves ; their speech is always kind and courteous, and a smile of welcome is ever on their lips. They are naked, it is true, but clothed in their seemliness and candour."

Columbus, after establishing relations of the most intimate and trusting hospitality with the young Cazique, received from

him a present of some gold ornaments. At the sight of the gold, the faces of the Europeans all at once showed such passionate longing, such greedy and fierce desire, that the Cazique and his subjects were astonished and instinctively filled with fear, as if their new friends had suddenly changed their nature and their disposition towards them. It was only too true ; the companions of Columbus only sought the imaginary riches of the west, while he sought for a mysterious portion of the universe. The sight of the gold had called them back to their covetousness ; their faces had become harsh and fierce as their thoughts. The Cazique, on learning that this metal was the god of the Europeans, explained to them, while pointing to the mountains, that there was behind those summits, a region from which gold came to him in abundance. Columbus no longer doubted that he had at last traced the riches of Solomon to their source, and, preparing everything for his speedy return to Europe in order to announce his triumph, he built a fort in the Cazique's village to leave a part of his companions there in safety during his absence. He chose forty picked men amongst his officers and sailors, and placed them under the command of Pedro de Arana. They were directed to collect information about the gold region, and to maintain the respect and friendship of the Indians for the Spaniards. He set out on his return to Europe, laden with the gifts of the chief and bringing back all the ornaments and crowns of pure gold that he had been able to procure, during his stay, by presents or by exchange with the natives.

In coasting the windings of the island, he met his treacherous companion, Alonzo Pinzon. On the pretext of having lost sight of the admiral, Pinzon had taken a separate course. Hidden in a deep inlet of the island, he had landed, and, instead of imitating the mildness and policy of Columbus, had stained his first steps with blood. The admiral, on finding his lieutenant, pretended to be satisfied with his excuses, and to attribute his desertion to the darkness of the night. He ordered Pinzon to follow with his ship to Europe.

They again took the sea together, impatient to announce to Spain the news of their marvelous voyage.

But the ocean, which had brought them kindly with its trade winds, from billow to billow, to the coast of America, seemed,

with contrary winds and waves, to wish to drive them obstinately from the land that they burned to see again.

Columbus, thanks to his knowledge of seamanship and the notes of his reckonings which he had kept as a secret from his pilots, alone knew the course and alone estimated the distance truly. His companions still thought themselves thousands of leagues from Europe, when he already anticipated the nearness of the Azores, which he soon sighted.

Terrible squalls, heaped up clouds, thunder and lightning such as they had never seen blaze in the sky to quench itself in the sea ; foaming mountains of wave whirling his ships, which obeyed neither sail or rudder, for six days and nights opened and closed the grave to himself and his companions on the threshold of their country.

The signals, made by the two vessels in the darkness, disappeared. Each one believed in the loss of the other, as each floated at the will of the never-ending storm, between the Azores and the Spanish coast. Columbus, who did not doubt that the Pinta was buried in the depths with Pinzon, and whose torn sails and wave-abandoned rudder no longer guided the ship, expected to founder every minute under one of these mountains of water which he climbed and sunk from with their foam. He had sacrificed his life ; but he could not, without despair, sacrifice his glory. To know that the mystery and the discovery which he brought back to the Old World was buried with him for centuries, so near port, was such a cruel mockery of Providence that he could not bend even his piety to meet it. His soul rebelled against this freak of fortune. To die at the moment when he touched the shore of Europe but with his foot, and after having deposited his secret and his treasure in the memory of his country, was a destiny that he accepted with joy ; but to leave a second universe to die, so to say, with him, and to carry to the tomb the solution, at last found, of this enigma of the globe, which men, his brothers, would perhaps seek for in vain during as many centuries as it had been hidden from them, was a million deaths in one !

He only asked God, in his vows to all the sanctuaries of Spain, to bear him, at least, to the shore with his wreckage, the proofs of his discovery and his return. Meanwhile tempest followed tempest, and the vessel was full of water. The bitter

looks, the irritable murmurs, or sullen silence of his companions reproached him with the obstinacy that had allured or forced them to this fatal voyage. They regarded this enduring wrath of the elements as a vengeance of the ocean, because a too daring man had robbed it of its mystery. They spoke of throwing him into the sea, to obtain, by a brilliant atonement, the calming of the waves.

XLVII.

Columbus, heedless of their wrath, and solely concerned about the fate of his discovery, wrote several short accounts of it on parchment; inclosed some of them in a roll of wax, others in cedar boxes, and threw these witnessess into the sea for chance to carry them some day, after him, to the shore. It is said that one of these buoys, abandoned to the winds and waves, was tossed on the surface for three centuries and a half, in the channel or on the strands of the sea, and that a sailor of a European ship, while embarking ballast for his vessel, some time ago, on the shingle of the African coast opposite Gibraltar, picked up a petrified cocconut and took it to his captain as a worthless natural curiosity. The captain, on opening the nut to find out if the kernel had withstood the lapse of time, found, enclosed in the hollow shell, a parchment on which was written in Gothic letters, deciphered with difficulty by a Gibraltar scholar, these words :

“ We cannot hold out another day against the storm ; we are between Spain and the newly discovered islands of the west. If the caravel founders, may someone pick up this testimony !

“ CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.”

The ocean had kept this message for three hundred and fifty-eight years, and only gave it up to Europe after America, colonized, flourishing and free, was a rival of the Old Continent. A freak of fortune to inform men of what could have remained hidden for so many centuries, if Providence had not forbidden the waves to drown its great messenger in the person of Columbus.

XLVIII.

On the following day there was a cry of Land ! It was the Portuguese island of Santa Maria, at the extremity of the Azores.

Columbus and his companions were driven away from it by the jealous persecution of the Portuguese.

Again given up to the extremes of hunger and the fury of the storm for days interminable, they only entered the mouth of the Tagus on the 4th of March, where they at last cast anchor in a shore that was indeed European, but was a rival of Spain.

Columbus, being presented to the King of Portugal, gave him an account of his discoveries without revealing his course, for fear that prince should precede the fleets of Isabella. The Portuguese of the court of John II., King of Portugal, advised that king to have the famous sailor assassinated, in order to bury with him the secret and the rights of the crown of Spain over these new countries. John II. was indignant at this baseness. Columbus, whom he received with honour, sent a courier overland to his sovereigns to announce his success and his speedy return by sea to Palos, where he disembarked, at daybreak, on the 15th March, in the midst of a population intoxicated by joy and pride who advanced into the waves to carry him ashore in triumph. He threw himself into the arms of his friend and protector, the humble Prior of the Monastery of Rabida, Juan Peres, who had alone believed in him, and whom one-half the globe recompensed for his faith. Columbus went in procession, barefoot, to the monastery church, to give thanks for his safety, his glory and the conquest achieved for Spain. A whole people followed him with blessings to the door of that lowly monastery where, alone and on foot, with his son, he had some years before begged the hospitality that was extended to mendicants. Never since the beginning of the world had a man amongst men brought to his country and posterity such a conquest, with the exception of those who brought to the earth the revelation of a creed; and this conquest of Columbus had so far cost humanity neither a crime, a life, a drop of blood, nor a tear. His happiest days were those which he passed, resting in the brightness of his hopes and glory, at the monastery of Rabida with his host and friend, the Prior of the monastery, and in the embraces of his sons.

XLIX.

And as if heaven had wished to fill the measure of his happiness, and to avenge him on the envy that pursued him, Alonzo

Pinzon, the captain of his second ship, entered on the following day with the *Pinta* into the harbour of Palos, where he hoped to arrive before his chief, and rob him of the first fruits of his triumph. But disappointed in his guilty intention, and fearing the punishment of his desertion, if disclosed by the admiral, Pinzon died of despair and envy on touching land and seeing the vessel of Columbus at anchor in the harbour. Columbus was too generous to feel exultation, still less to seek revenge, and the envious Nemesis of great men seemed to expire, of its own accord, at his feet.

L.

Isabella and Ferdinand, being informed of the return of Columbus, and of their conquest, by the message that their admiral had sent from Lisbon, met him at Barcelona with pomp and ovations worthy of the greatness of his services. The Spanish nobility hastened from all the provinces to join his train. He made his entry as a victor and as ruler of an empire to come. The Indians brought over by the squadron, as a living proof of the existence of other human races in the newly-discovered countries, marched at the head of the procession, their bodies painted in various colours and adorned with necklaces of gold and pearls; the animals and birds, the strange plants, and the precious stones gathered on those shores, were displayed in golden vessels and carried on the heads of black or Moorish slaves. The hungry crowd flocked round them; fabulous stories pursued the steps of the officers and the admiral's companions in renown. Columbus followed, mounted on one of the King's horses, richly caparisoned, escorted by a numerous cavalcade of courtiers and gentlemen. All eyes were concentrated on this God-inspired man who had lifted the veil of the ocean. They looked in his face for the visible sign of his mission, and believed they saw it there. The beauty of his features, the pensive majesty of his look, the vigour of eternal youth joined to the gravity of years already mature, the thought behind the deed, the strength under the white hairs, the inner consciousness of his worth joined to the piety towards God that had chosen him from amongst all, the gratitude to his sovereigns who returned to him in honours what he had brought to them in conquests, made of Columbus

at this moment, say the spectators of his entry into Barcelona, one of those heroes of prophesy and Bible history under whose feet the people threw palms, in wonder and adoration. "None reached his level," they report; "all acknowledged in him the greatest and most favoured of men."

Isabella and Ferdinand received him on their throne, which was sheltered from the sun by a golden canopy. They rose before him as before a messenger of God, afterwards seating him on a level with the throne, while they listened to his solemn and circumstantial account of his voyage. At the end of the recital, which the eloquence and poetry that habitually flowed from the admiral's lips had coloured with his inexhaustible imagination and fired with his holy enthusiasm, the King and Queen, moved to tears, fell on their knees and commenced, in an outburst of devotion, the *Te Deum*, a hymn for the greatest victory that the Almighty had ever granted to a king.

Couriers instantly set out to bear the great news and the victorious name of Columbus to all the courts of Europe. The obscurity that had, till then, surrounded his life changed to a fame and glory for his name that filled the world. Columbus neither allowed his soul to be puffed up by these honours that had been decreed to his person, nor his modesty to be humiliated by the jealousies that began to spring up around his glory.

One day, when he had been invited to the table of Ferdinand and Isabella, one of the guests, envious of the honours granted to the son of a wool carder, artfully asked him if he thought that no one except himself could have discovered that other hemisphere, in case he had not been born. Columbus did not answer the question, for fear he should say too much or too little of himself; but, taking an egg between his fingers, he turned to all the guests and requested them to make it stand on end. No one succeeded. Columbus then crushed one end of the egg, and, placing it on the broken oval, showed his rivals that there was no merit in a simple idea, but yet that no one could suspect its existence before a first inventor had given others the proof of it: thus ascribing to the Supreme Giver of inspiration the merit of his enterprise, while at the same time claiming for himself alone the honour of priority. This parable became, afterwards, the answer of every man chosen by Provi-

dence to point out a road to his fellows and to be the first to travel it, not indeed as being greater, but as being more favoured by inspiration than his brethren.

The honours and titles, and the future bestowal of the lands, the discovery and conquest of which he would go to complete, became in his formal treaties with the court the appanage of Columbus. He obtained the vice-royalty, the administration, and a quarter of the riches or products, of every kind, of the seas, islands, and continents where he should plant the cross of the Church and the flag of Spain.

Fonseca, Archdeacon of Seville, was entrusted, under the title of "Patriarch of India," with the preparation and equipment of the new expedition that Columbus was about to lead to greater conquests; but, from the day of his appointment, Fonseca became the secret rival of the great sailor, and, as if he had been anxious to disparage the genius that he had been commissioned to assist, while appearing to furnish Columbus liberally with means, he raised obstacles in his path. His delays and pretexts reduced to seventeen ships the squadron that was destined to carry the admiral back across the Atlantic. Nevertheless, the venturesome genius of the Spaniards of this age, the spirit of religious proselytism, and the spirit of chivalry, hurried on board the vessels a large number of monks, gentlemen, and adventurers, who were eager, the former to carry the truth, the latter to bring back fame and fortune, in being the first to throw themselves into these countries that made wider the imagination of mankind.

Workmen of all trades, farmers from every zone, domestic animals of all kinds, seeds and plants, vine stocks and fruit trees, sugar canes, samples of all the arts and trades of Europe, were embarked on the transports to test the climate, fertilize the soil, and tempt the men of these new climes, in order to obtain from them gold and pearls, with the perfume and spices of India, in exchange for things of small value in Europe. It was the crusade of religion, of war and industry, of glory and avarice: for these the things of heaven, for the others the things of earth, for all the marvelous and the unknown.

The most illustrious of these associates who embarked with Columbus was Alonzo de Ojeda, formerly page to Isabella, the handsomest, the most fearless, and most adventurous knight of

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the court. His soul and judgment so overflowed with daring that he carried enthusiasm to the verge of madness. He it was who, one day when Isabella had ascended to the top of the huge tower of Seville, called the Giralda, to admire its wonderful height and to look down from above on the streets and houses of the city lying like an ant-hill at her feet, sprung on a narrow beam that projected from the battlements, and, pirouetting on one foot at the extremity of this joist, performed prodigies of dexterity and daring over the abyss to give pleasure to his sovereign, without the giddiness of threatening death dazing his eyes or terrifying his mind.

LI.

On the 25th September, 1493, the fleet left the Bay of Cadiz. Shouts of joy all along the shore were the omens of this second departure, which seemed destined only for a long triumph. The two sons of Columbus accompanied their father to the admiral's ship. He blessed them, and left them in Spain, so that the better part of his life, at least, should remain safe from the perils that he went to meet. Three large ships and fourteen caravels made up the fleet. The ocean was crossed as easily as on the first occasion. The fleet discovered Guadeloupe on the 2nd November, passed through the midst of the Caribbee Islands, christened this archipelago with names borrowed from holy memories ; and, soon afterwards touching at the point of Hispaniola (now Haiti), Columbus made sail towards the gulf where he had built the fort and left his forty companions. He returned full, at once, of anxiety and hope. Night covered the shore when he cast anchor in the roadstead, but he did not wait for daylight to ascertain the fate of his colony. A salvo of cannons rang out upon the waves to inform the Spaniards of his return : but the cannon of the fort remained dumb ; only the echo of those solitudes returned the greeting of Europe to the New World. On the morrow, at day-break, he saw the deserted shore, the destroyed fort, the cannon half buried in its ruins, the bones of the Spaniards bleaching on the sand, and even the village of the caziques abandoned.

The few natives who were seen in the distance, on the edge of the forest, seemed to hesitate to approach, as if they had been held

back by a feeling of remorse or by a fear of vengeance. The cazique, more confident in his own innocence and in the justice of Columbus, whom he had learned to love, at last came forward, lamenting the crimes of the Spaniards, who had taken advantage of the hospitality of his subjects to oppress the natives, and who had carried off their daughters and their wives, reduced their hosts to slavery, and at last roused the vengeance of his tribe.

After having killed a great number of the Indians and burned their huts, they had been killed themselves. The burnt fort, covering their bones, was the first monument of the contact between these two human families, one of which brought slavery and devastation to the other.

Columbus deplored the crimes of his companions and the misfortunes of the cazique. He resolved to seek another part of the shore to disembark and form a settlement on the coasts of the island.

Amongst the young Indian captives from the neighbouring islands, who were prisoners on board, Catalina, the most beautiful amongst them, had charmed the eyes of a cazique who had visited the vessel of Columbus. A plan of escape had been arranged between this chief and the object of his love in the language of signs, which the Europeans did not understand.

The night on which Columbus unfurled his sails, Catalina and her companions, deceiving the vigilance of their tyrants, threw themselves into the sea; vainly pursued by the Europeans' boats, they swam towards the shore, where the young cazique had kindled a fire to guide them.

The two lovers, united by this wonderful deed of strength and daring, took refuge in the forests from the wrath of the Europeans.

I.II.

Columbus, again landing on a virgin beach at some distance, founded on it the town of Isabella, established friendly relations with the natives, built, cultivated and governed the first European colony, the mother of so many others; he sent armed detachments to visit the plains and mountains of Hispaniola, first treating kindly, then tempting, and finally subduing, by mild and just laws, the different tribes of these vast territories; he

built forts and laid out roads to the different parts of his empire, seeking for gold, which was less abundant than he expected in these regions which he still confounded with India, and only finding the inexhaustible wealth of a soil rich to prodigality and a people as easy to bring into subjugation as to tyrannise.

He sent back the greater number of his vessels to Spain to ask his sovereign for fresh consignments of men, animals, tools, and the plants and seeds necessary for the vast expanse of the territories that he was about to subjugate to the manners, religion and arts of Europe.

But the malcontents, the ambitious and the envious were the first to embark on his fleet, in order to sow complaints, accusations and calumnies against him.

He remained alone, afflicted by gout, suffering excruciating pain, condemned to bodily inactivity while his mind was in constant anxiety, beset, in his budding colony, by the rivalries, revolts and conspiracies, the shameless debauchery and lack of provisions among his crews.

Ever kind and magnanimous, Columbus, victorious by moral force alone, over the turbulence of his countrymen and the mutiny of his lieutenants, limited himself to consigning the insubordinate to the vessels in the roadstead.

When he had recovered from his long illness, he went over the island at the head of a column of picked men, vainly seeking the gold mines of Solomon, but studying the nature and customs of the island, and sowing everywhere, on his way, respect and love for his name.

LIII.

He found, on his return, the same disorders, the same insubordination and the same vices. The Spaniards abused the superstition of the natives with regard to them and the terror with which their horses inspired them. The Indians took them to be marvelous beings, forming one with their riders, at once smiting, trampling on and blasting the enemies of the Europeans. Thanks to this terror, they subjugated, chained, profaned, violated and tortured this gentle and obedient people.

Columbus again took harsh measures against the persecution of the Indians by his companions. He wished to bring them the faith and the arts of Europe, not the yoke, vice and death.

After having re-established some degree of order, he embarked with the intention of visiting the island of Cuba, which he had hardly seen. He touched there and coasted its shores a long time, without seeing the end of the island which he took to be a continent. He sailed from there towards Jamaica, another island of vast extent, the summits of which he saw in the clouds. Afterwards crossing an archipelago which he called the "Queen's Gardens," from the richness and the perfume of the vegetation that clothed the islands, he returned to Cuba and succeeded in establishing friendly relations with the natives.

The Indians took part, with mingled astonishment and respect, in the ceremonies of Christian worship which the Spaniards celebrated in a grotto, under the palm trees on the shore. One of their old men approached Columbus after the ceremony and said to him in a solemn voice :

"What you have just done is good, for it appears to be your worship of the universal God. It is said that you come to these regions with a strong force, and an authority superior to all resistance. If that is so, learn from me what our ancestors told our fathers, who have repeated it to us. After the souls of men are separated from the body by the will of divine beings, they go, some to a country without sun or trees, others to regions of brightness and bliss, according as they have deserved well or ill here below in doing good or evil to their fellows. If then you must die as we, take care that you do not work us evil, us and those who have not done it unto you !"

This speech of the old Indian, related by Las-Casas, proves that the Indians had a religion almost evangelical in the simplicity and purity of its morality, a mysterious emanation, either from a primitive nature the brightness of which debauchery and vice had not yet tarnished, or from an old and worn-out civilization which had left its traces of light in their traditions.

LIV.

Columbus, after a long and laborious exploration, returned in a dying state to Hispaniola. His hardships and anxieties, added to his sufferings and the weight of years which his mind did not feel, but which weighed on his limbs, had for a moment triumphed over his genius. His sailors brought him back to Isabella,

prostrate and unconscious. But Providence, which had never deserted him, watched over him during the loss of his faculties. He found, on waking from his stupor, his beloved brother, Bartholomew Columbus, at the head of his bed. Bartholomew had come from Europe to Hispaniola, as if he had had a warning of the peril and need in which his brother was to be placed. He was the strength of the family, of which Diego, the third brother, was the gentleness, and Christopher the genius. The vigour of his body equalled that of his mind. He was of athletic build, of the temper of iron, of robust health, of imposing presence, and with a voice that in its pitch overpowered the wind and the sea. A sailor from his youth, a soldier and an adventurer all his life, endowed by nature and habits with the daring that commands obedience, and the justice that makes discipline light, a man as fit to rule as to fight, he was the most suitable lieutenant for Columbus in the extreme circumstances into which anarchy had thrown his empire, and, above all, he was a brother filled with as much respect as affection for his leader and for the glory of his name. The spirit of family was a guarantee to Columbus for the fidelity of his lieutenant.

The affection between the two brothers was the best pledge of the trust of the one and the submission of the other.

Columbus handed over the command and government to his brother during the long months when exhausted nature condemned him to inaction and repose, under the title of Adelantado or general controller and vice-governor of the countries under his authority.

Bartholomew, who was a stricter administrator than his brother, compelled more respect, but also roused more resistance.

The rashness and perfidy of the young Spanish soldier Ojeda stirred up wars of despair between the Indians and the colony. This fearless adventurer having penetrated with some horsemen to the most distant and independent parts of the island, persuaded one of the caziques to accompany him on his return with a large number of Indians, in order to admire the greatness and wealth of the Europeans.

The beguiled chief followed Ojeda. After a march of some days and during a halt on the banks of a river, Ojeda, taking advantage of the simplicity of the Indian chief, directed his notice to a pair of handcuffs of polished steel, the brightness of

which dazzled the cazique. Ojeda told him that these fetters were the bracelets that the European kings wore before their subjects on days of ceremony. He inspired his guest with a wish to put them on also, and, mounting a horse like a Spaniard, to show himself to his Indians in these pretended accoutrements of the sovereigns of the old world. But scarcely had the unfortunate cazique mounted behind the deceitful Ojeda and put on the handcuffs, the objects of his childish vanity, than the Spanish horsemen, starting at a gallop and dragging their prisoner along with them, crossed the island and brought him in chains to the colony, where they kept him in the fetters for which he had innocently wished. A widespread insurrection roused the Indians against this perfidious act of the strangers, in whom they had first seen guests, friends, benefactors and gods. This insurrection led to vengeance on the part of the Spaniards. They reduced the Indians to a state of slavery, and sent four vessels, laden with the victims of their cupidity, to Spain to make an infamous trade of them as if in human cattle, thus making good, by the price of these slaves, the gold which they had expected to gather like dust in the countries where they found only flesh and blood. The war degenerated into a man-hunt. Dogs, brought from Europe and trained to this chase in the forests, scenting and seizing the natives and tearing their throats, assisted the Spaniards in this inhuman devastation of the country.

LV.

Columbus, having at last recovered from his long illness, again took up the reins of government, and was himself carried away by the wars that were kindled during the interregnum. He became soldier and peace-maker, after having been a sailor; won decisive battles against the Indians, and made them submissive to the yoke that was made easier to bear by his kindness and diplomacy, imposing on them only a small tribute in gold and the produce of their land, as a token of allegiance rather than of submission.

The island flourished once more under his temperate government; but the confiding and unhappy cazique, Guanacanari, who had been the first to welcome these visitors to his territory,

ashamed and desperate at having involuntarily been the accomplice in the enslavement of his country, fled forever to the precipitous mountains of the island, and died there in freedom, so that he might not live as a slave under the laws of those who had taken advantage of his probity.

During this weakness of Columbus and these troubles in the island, his enemies, working for his disgrace at court, had poisoned the mind of Ferdinand against him. Isabella, who was firmer in her admiration for this great man, vainly shielded him with her favour. The court had sent to Hispaniola a magistrate invested with secret powers, which authorized him to enquire into the alleged crimes of the viceroy, to deprive him of his authority and to send him to Europe, if his guilt were proved. This biased judge, whose name was Aguado, arrived at Hispaniola while the viceroy was at the head of his troops, in the interior of the island, occupied in the pacification and administration of the country. Forgetting the gratitude that he owed to Columbus, who was the founder of his fortune, Aguado, even before gathering information, pronounced Columbus guilty and provisionally deposed from his sovereign functions. Surrounded and applauded, on his landing, by the malcontents of the colony, he sent Columbus an order to come to Isabella, the capital town of the Spaniards, and to make acknowledgment of his authority. Columbus, encompassed by his friends and most devoted of his soldiers, could refuse obedience to the insolent command of a subordinate. He bowed, on the contrary, to the very name of his sovereign; went unarmed to Aguado, and, surrendering him entire authority, allowed him freely to prepare the shameful action that his slanderers were entering against him. But at the very moment when his fortune was thus sinking before persecution, it procured for him one of those favours that could most readily gain him the favours of the court.

One of his young officers, named Miguel Diaz, having killed one of his comrades in a duel, fled, for fear of punishment, to a wild and distant part of the island. The tribe that inhabited these mountains was governed by a young Indian woman of great beauty, the widow of a cazique. She conceived a passionate attachment for the Spanish fugitive, and married him. Yet Diaz, though beloved and crowned by the object of his

affection, could not forget his country or conceal the sadness that regret for his compatriots plainly marked on his face. His wife, while trying to obtain from him the confession of his melancholy, learned from him that gold was the passion of the Spaniards, and that they would come to live with him, in these regions, if they had the hope of finding the precious metal there. The young Indian wife, delighted to retain the presence of him she loved at this price, revealed to him the existence of inexhaustible mines, hidden in the mountains. The possessor of this secret, and sure of obtaining pardon at this price, Diaz hastened to bear the intelligence of the treasure to Columbus.

The viceroy's brother, Bartholomew Columbus, set out with Diaz and an escort of troops to verify the discovery. They arrived in a few days at a valley where the river rolled gold with its sand, and where the rocks in its bed were incrustated with particles of the metal. Columbus built a fortress in the neighbourhood, dug out and enlarged the mines that had been already opened in ancient times, gathering immense riches from them for his sovereigns, and persuading himself more and more that he had entered the fabulous land of Ophir. Diaz, who was grateful and true to his young Indian wife, to whom he owed his pardon, his fortune, and his happiness, had their marriage blessed by the priests of his religion, and ruled over his tribe in peace.

LVI.

Columbus, yielding without resistance to Aguado's orders after this discovery, embarked with his judge to Spain. He arrived there, after a voyage of eight months, rather as an accused man who is being led to punishment than as a victor who brings back his trophies. Calumny, incredulity and reproaches greeted him at Cadiz. Spain, which had expected prodigies, saw returning from the land of its dreams only disappointed adventurers, accusers and naked slaves. The unfortunate cazique, still fettered in Ojeda's manacles and brought by Aguado, as a living trophy to Ferdinand and Isabella, had died at sea, cursing his misplaced trust in the Europeans and their treachery.

Columbus, suiting his dress to the sorrow and misery of his

position, went to Burgos, where the court resided, attired as a Franciscan and wearing only a rope as girdle for his robe, his head weighed down by years, by cares, by affliction and white hairs, barefoot, as one who comes, a talented suppliant, to ask forgiveness for the glory he had won. Isabella alone received him with tender compassion and persisted in believing in his honesty and his services. This constant favour on the part of the Queen, although disguised, sustained the admiral against the aspersions and accusations of the courtiers. He proposed fresh voyages and vaster discoveries. They consented to again entrust him with vessels, but made him consume, in systematic delays, the few years of strength that his advanced age now left him. The pious Isabella, in granting power and new titles to Columbus, stipulated for conditions of liberty and humanity in favour of the Indians, that were in advance of the ideas of her age. A woman's heart instinctively proscribed the slavery which philosophy and religion were only to abolish four centuries later.

At last Columbus, being exculpated, was able to embark and make sail towards his new country: but hatred and envy followed him even on board the vessel on which he was to hoist his admiral's pennant. Breviesca, the treasurer of the Patriarch of India, Fonseca, an enemy to Columbus, launched forth in insults against the admiral at the moment when the anchor was weighed. Columbus, who had restrained himself till then by power of will, by patience and by the appreciation of the vast importance of his mission, for the first time gave way to bitterness and indignation. At this last dishonour offered him by his enemies, he came down to the level of ordinary men for a moment, and, from the full height of his soul, and with all the might of his arm, twice strengthened by his anger, falling on his unworthy persecutor, he felled him on the bridge, and spurned him, with contempt, at his feet. Such was the farewell greeting of the jealousy of Europe to the man whom they thought too great, or too fortunate, to be mortal. This sudden vengeance of the admiral left fresh resentment in Fonseca's heart and new accusations for his enemies to profit by. The rising wind took him from the sight of the shore, and from the insults of his countrymen.

LVII.

Arriving this time, by another route, at the island of the Trinity, he reconnoitred it, named it, and, afterwards doubling it, coasted the true shore of America near the mouth of the Oronoco. The freshness of the sea water that he tasted in these latitudes, should have convinced him that the river which discharged itself into the ocean in a volume sufficient to sweeten its waters could only come from a continent. Yet he landed on this coast without suspecting that it was the shore of an unknown world. He found it deserted and silent like a domain awaiting its owners. A smoke above the vast forests in the distance, and an abandoned hut and some traces of bare feet on the sands of the beach were all he saw of America.

All he did himself was to imprint the first foot mark there, and to pass a single night under the sail that served him for a tent ; but that first step should have been sufficient to give his name to this hemisphere.

LVIII.

He set out again from the Gulf of Paria, and once more sighted the coast of Hispaniola, after painstaking investigations of all the neighbouring seas. His troubles of mind and body, his long waiting in Spain, the ingratitude of his countrymen, the coolness of Ferdinand and the hatred of his ministers, the night watches during his voyages and the infirmities of age, had done more to break him down than the trials of the sea.

His eyes, inflamed from sleeplessness and the study of charts and of the sky, were affected ; his limbs, stiff and painful from gout, refused to bear him. His mind alone was sound and his genius, piercing the future, bore him in thought out of his sufferings and beyond the limits of time. His brother Bartholomew who had carried on the government of the colony in his absence, was still his consolation and support.

He hastened to meet the admiral as soon as his lookout men signalled a sail.

Bartholomew told his brother of the vicissitudes of Hispaniola during his absence.

Scarcely had he completed the exploration and pacification of the country, when the excesses of the Spaniards and the con-

spiracies of his own lieutenants had overthrown the work of his fortitude and wisdom. A superintendent of the colony, named Roldan, a popular and crafty man, had formed a party for himself amongst the sailors and adventurers, the scum of Spain cast upon the colony by the mother country. Together with them he had fortified himself on the opposite coast of St. Domingo, and had leagued himself against Bartholomew with the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes ; he had built, or captured, fortresses from which he defied the authority of his legitimate chief. The Indians, witnesses of the divisions amongst their oppressors, had profited by them to rebel and refuse the payment of tribute. Anarchy rent the new possession, and only the heroism of Bartholomew held the fragments together in his powerful hands. Ojeda had freighted ships in Spain on his own account ; and, cruising round and landing on the south coast of the island, had leagued himself with Roldan.

Roldan had afterwards betrayed Ojeda and again placed himself under the authority of the governor.

During these quarrels in the colony, don Fernando de Guerara, a young Spaniard of remarkable beauty, had inspired with a violent passion the daughter of Anacoana, the widow of the cazique, who, being carried off by Ojeda to Spain, had died as a prisoner on the voyage.

Anacoana herself was still young, and celebrated amongst the tribes of the island for her incomparable beauty, for her natural genius and poetical talent, which made her the adored sybil of her countrymen. In spite of the misfortunes of her husband, she had conceived a great admiration and unconquerable affection for the Spaniards. The country which she ruled with her brother was a home for these strangers. She loaded them with hospitality, with gold and with protection in their misfortunes. Her subjects, more civilized than the other Indian tribes, lived in peace, rich and contented under her laws. Roldan, who governed the part of the island that was under the sway of the beautiful Anacoana, had been jealous of the residence and influence of Fernando de Guerara at the court of the princess. He forbade him to marry her daughter and ordered him to embark. Fernando, detained by love, had refused to obey, and plotted against Roldan. Surprised and placed in chains in Anacoana's house by Roldan's soldiers, he had been taken to

Isabella for trial. An expedition, that had left the capital of the colony on the pretext of exploring the island, had been received with friendly interest in Anacoana's capital. The treacherous leader of the expedition, taking advantage of the queen's trust and hospitality, had persuaded her to invite thirty caziques from the south of the island to the feast which she was preparing for the Spaniards, who had plotted the death of their open-hearted protectress, her family, her guests and her people, and the burning of her possessions during the dances and banquets in which they took part. They invited Anacoana, her daughter, the thirty chiefs and the people to watch, from a balcony, the evolutions of their horses and a sham fight between the cavalry and their escort. Suddenly the horsemen rush upon the unarmed people, who had gathered in the square through curiosity; they butcher them and tread them under their horses' hoofs; then, surrounding Anacoana's palace with a hedge of foot soldiers to prevent the queen and her friends from leaving it, the Spaniards had set fire to the palace, still full of the feasting and festivity to which they themselves had just sat down; they had watched with a cruelty equal to their ingratitude the beautiful and unfortunate Anacoana, driven back into her palace, dying in the flames, and calling down upon them the vengeance of her gods!

This crime against hospitality, against innocence, against sovereignty, against beauty and genius of which the celebrated Anacoana was the symbol amongst the Indians, had thrown the island into a state of horror and disorder, over which Columbus could not for a long time prevail, notwithstanding all his honesty of purpose and his diplomacy. The flames of the palace and the blood of the queen, whose beauty dazzled them and whose national poetry intoxicated them with love and enthusiasm, rose up between the oppressors and the oppressed. The island became a field of slaughter, a convict prison and a cemetery for the unfortunate Indians. The Spaniards, as fanatical in their proselytism as they were cruel in their avarice, foreshadowed at Hispaniola the crimes which were soon to depopulate Mexico. These two races of men throttled each other in their greeting.

LIX.

While Columbus was endeavouring to separate and pacify these two parts of the population, King Ferdinand, informed

by his enemies of the misfortunes of the island, attributed them to the man who was remedying them. Columbus having asked the court to send him a magistrate of high rank to impose, by his judgments, the royal authority on his undisciplined companions, the court sent him Bobadilla, a man of incorruptible morals, but a fanatic of ungovernable pride. The ill-defined authority with which he was invested by the royal decree made him, at the same time, subordinate and superior to every other power. On arriving at Hispaniola, and being prejudiced against the admiral, he insolently summoned him to appear before him like a culprit, and, directing chains to be brought, he commanded the soldiers to load their general's limbs with them. The soldiers, accustomed to love and honour their leader, now made more venerable in their eyes by age and glory, hesitated and stood motionless, as if they had been ordered to perform an act of sacrilege. But Columbus, of his own accord holding his arms for the fetters which his King had sent to him, allowed his feet and hands to be chained by one of his own servants, a volunteer hangman, a low hireling in his household, called Espinosa, whose name Las Casas has preserved as a type of insolence and ingratitude. Columbus himself ordered his two brothers, Bartholomew and Diego, who were still at the head of the army corps in the interior, to submit themselves to his judge, without resistance or complaint. Confined in the dungeon of the fortress at Isabella, he resigned himself for several months to the preliminaries of his trial, in which all who had rebelled against him, and all his enemies, now become his accusers and his judges, vied with each other in charging him with the most odious and absurd accusations. Turned into an object of public fury and derision, he heard from the depths of his prison the ferocious jests and the jeers of his persecutors, who came every evening to insult him in his captivity. He expected each moment to see his executioners enter : Bobadilla, however, did not venture on the capital crime. He ordered the admiral to be expelled from the colony and sent to Spain, to submit himself to the justice, or the mercy, of the King. Alonzo de Villego was commissioned to guard him during the voyage. He was a kind-hearted man, obedient from a sense of soldierly duty, but indignant and pitiful while he obeyed. Columbus, on seeing him enter his dungeon, had no doubt that his last

hour had come. He had prepared himself for it, in the knowledge of his innocence and by prayer: yet his human nature shrunk from it.

"Where are you taking me?" he asked, questioning the officer by look and word.

"To the vessels on which you are going to embark, your excellency," answered Villejo.

"To embark?" replied Columbus, not believing the words that gave him back his life; "are you not deceiving me, Villejo?"

"No, your excellency," answered the officer, "I swear, by heaven, nothing is more true!"

He supported the steps of the admiral and put him on board the vessel, crushed by the weight of his fetters and followed by the insults of a cowardly populace.

But scarcely were the ships under sail when Villejo and Andreas Martin, the commanders of the vessel that had become "the floating prison of their leader, approached him with respect, as well as the whole crew, and wished to remove his irons.

Columbus, for whom these fetters were at once a proof of his obedience to Isabella and a witness to the injustice of men, by which he suffered in his body, but of which in his soul he was proud, thanked them, but obstinately refused to be freed from the chains.

"No," he answered. "My sovereigns have written to me to submit to Bobadilla. It is in their name that they have loaded me with chains. I will bear them until they release me themselves, and I will keep them afterwards," he added with a bitter satisfaction in his services and his innocence, "as a monument of the reward accorded by men to my labours."

His son relates, as well as Las Casas, that Columbus was true to this promise and he ever afterwards kept his chains hung up before his eyes wherever he lived, and that in his will he gave instructions that they should be enclosed with him in his coffin; as if he had wished to appeal to God from the injustice and ingratitude of his contemporaries, and to present to heaven the material proofs of the iniquity and cruelty of the world.

LX.

Party hatreds, however, do not cross the seas. The spoliation, the captivity and the fetters of Columbus roused the pity and indignation of the people of Cadiz. When they saw this old man, who a little while before had brought an empire to his country, himself brought back from that empire as a common criminal to atone for his services by disgrace, their hearts rebelled against Bobadilla.

Isabella, who was then at Granada, shed tears over this indignity, ordering that his fetters should be replaced by rich garments and his jailors by an escort of honour. She summoned him to Granada. He fell at her feet and sobs of gratitude prevented him for a long time from speaking.

The King and Queen did not even deign to examine the case against so great a defendant; he was acquitted by their regard for him as much as by his innocence. They kept the admiral at their court for some time and sent another governor, named Ovando, to replace Bobadilla.

Ovando had the good qualities that make a man of integrity, without the greatness of soul that makes the nobleman. His was one of those characters in which everything is narrow, even duty, and in which honesty seems a parsimony of nature. He was the man least fitted to replace a really great man. He received instructions from Isabella to protect the Indians and a prohibition from selling them as slaves. The portion of the revenues falling to Columbus by treaty, were to be sent to him in Spain, as well as the treasures of which he had been despoiled by Bobadilla.

A fleet of thirty sails carried the new governor to Hispaniola.

Columbus, unconscious of old age and at rest from persecution, was impatient of repose and even of the honours paid him by his country. Vasco de Gama had just discovered the route to India by the Cape of Good Hope. The world was full of astonishment at and admiration for the discovery of the Portuguese sailor. A noble rivalry troubled the mind of the Genoese seaman. Being convinced of the rotundity of the earth, he thought he would reach the extreme coasts of the eastern world in sailing due west. He asked the Spanish court for the command of a fourth expedition, and embarked at

Cadiz, on the 19th May, 1502, for the last time. His brother, Bartholomew and his son Fernando, now fourteen years of age, accompanied him. His fleet was composed of four small vessels that were fit for sailing along the coast and for entering without danger into the coves and the mouths of rivers which he wished to explore.

His crews were only 150 seamen all told. Although he approached his seventieth year, his green old age had withstood the weight of time by his mental vigour; neither his painful maladies nor the prospect of death turned him aside from his goal.

"Man," he said, "is a tool that should break at its work in the hands of the Providence that makes use of it for her designs. So long as the body has the power the mind should have the will."

He had decided to touch, in passing, at Hispaniola, to refit, for which he had the authorization of the court.

He crossed the ocean in a heavy sea, and arrived in sight of Hispaniola with his masts broken, his sails in tatters and his ships without water or provisions. His maritime knowledge warned him of a more terrible storm than those to which he had been exposed. He sent a boat to ask Governor Ovando for permission to take shelter in the bay of Isabella. Informed by his prognostications of the dangers that the sea was about to let loose on his coasts, Columbus, in his letter, warned Ovando to delay the departure of a numerous fleet which was ready to set out from Hispaniola for Spain, laden with all the treasures of the new world. Ovando cruelly refused Columbus the moment's refuge which he begged for in the harbour he had himself discovered.

He withdrew, in indignation and as an outlaw, seeking far from the dominion of Ovando for a shelter under the remoter cliffs of the island, where he waited for the storm he had foretold. This storm swallowed the Governor's entire fleet, the treasures and the lives of a thousand Spaniards.

Columbus felt it even in the bay where he had taken shelter; he grieved over the misfortunes of his countrymen, and, leaving this cruel land, he once more saw Jamaica and landed on the continent in the bay of Honduras.

Sixty days of continuous tempest tossed him from one cape

to another and from the continent to the islands, on the unknown shores of that America, the conquest of which the storm seemed to dispute with him!

He lost one of his ships with the fifty men who manned it at the mouth of a river which he named the "Beach of the Disaster." As the sea persistently closed to him the way to that India which he still expected to sight, he cast anchor between a delicious island and the continent.

Being visited by the Indians, he embarked seven of them on his ships in order to familiarize himself with their language and to obtain information. Together with them he coasted a land where gold and pearls were abundant in the hands of the natives. At the commencement of the year 1504, he ascended the river Veragua and sent his brother Bartholomew at the head of sixty Spaniards to visit the villages on the coast and search for the gold mines.

Bartholomew found only savages and forests. The admiral left this river and entered another, the banks of which were peopled by Indians who lavished gold on his crews in exchange for the commonest trinkets of Europe.

He believed he was at the goal of his chimeras, when he was, in reality, at the climax of his disasters. War broke out between this handful of Europeans and the numerous people of these districts. Bartholomew Columbus knocked down with his fist, and took captive, the most powerful and formidable of the Indian chiefs. A village which the companions of Columbus had built on the coast, in order to trade with the interior, was taken and set fire to in the night by the natives: eight Spaniards, pierced by their arrows, perished under the ruins of their huts. Bartholomew rallied the bravest and drove the hordes back into the forests; but the antipathy increased on both sides in consequence of the blood that had been shed. A crowd of Indian canoes attacked the long boat of the squadron, as it endeavoured to ascend further up the river: all the Europeans who manned it were killed. During this furious struggle, Columbus, who was detained on board his ship by his bodily weakness and his maladies, kept the cazique and the Indian chiefs prisoners on his vessel. These chiefs, being informed of the devastation of their territory and the captivity of their women, endeavoured to escape

one dark night by raising the trap-door that closed their floating dungeon. The crew, awakened by the noise, drove them back into their prison and closed the hatch with an iron bar. The next day, when the hatch was opened to take them food, they only found their corpses: they had killed each other to a man, in despair and to escape slavery.

LXI.

Being soon separated by the breakers from his brother Bartholomew, who was on shore with the remains of the expedition, there was no way of communicating with him left to Columbus, except by the courage of one of his officers who swam through the surf to carry backwards and forwards the tidings which constantly grew worse. He could neither withdraw from his friends nor desert them in their disasters. Uneasiness, illness, hunger and the prospect of a shipwreck, without shelter and without witnesses, on a shore so longed for and so fatal, conflicted in his soul with his heroic constancy and his pious resignation to the will of God, of whom he felt himself to be at once the messenger and the victim. He thus described, during his spells of wakefulness, the state of his mind :

"Worn out, I had fallen asleep, when a voice full of sorrow and compassion spoke to me as follows : Foolish man ! so slow to believe and serve your God, the God of the universe ! Did He do more for Moses or David, His servants ? From the hour of your birth He has always taken the greatest care of you. Since you have reached man's estate He has made your obscure name ring marvelously through all the earth ; He has given you India for a possession, that favoured partion of creation ; He has found for you the keys to the barriers of the vast ocean, till then closed by such mighty chains. Turn towards Him and bless His mercifulness to you. If there still remains some great enterprise to accomplish, your age will be no obstacle to His designs. Was not Abraham a hundred years old when he begat Isaac, and was Sara young ? Who has caused your present afflictions : God or the world ? The promises He made you, He has never broken ; He has never said, after having received your services, that you had misunderstood Him. He keeps all His promises, and surpasses them : what you are

suffering to-day is the reward for labours and dangers undergone in serving other masters. Fear nothing, then, and take courage from your very despair. All these tribulations are inevitable, and not without a reason : they must be fulfilled. And the voice that had spoken to me left me filled with courage and consolation."

LXII.

At last the change of season calmed the sea, and the two brothers, so long separated, rejoined each other on the ships. They slowly returned to Hispaniola. One of the three caravels foundered from the weakness of long service, when near the shore. Two worn-out ships alone remained to him to stow away his crews. His companions disheartened, without provisions and without strength ; his anchors lost, his ships making water, and all their ribs worm-eaten and pierced, he relates, "with as many holes as a honeycomb ;" the pitiless winds and sea driving him from Hispaniola to Jamaica ; his ships on the point of sinking, barely gave him time to run them aground on the beach in an unknown bay, to bind them together with cables and planks, making them but one whole ; raising tents for his crews on these connected decks, to wait, in this frightful state of shipwreck, for the aid of Providence.

The Indians, attracted by the sight of the shipwreck and the fortress built by the strangers on their beach, exchanged provisions with the Spaniards for worthless articles, the novelty of which made them valuable in their eyes. Meanwhile the months rolled by, provisions were exhausted, the terrors of the future and the seditious murmurs of the crews threw the admiral's mind into a state of anxiety.

The only hope of safety that there remained was a message of distress to Ovando, the governor of Hispaniola. But fifty leagues of sea separated Hispaniola from Jamaica. One of the savage's canoes was the only craft he could put afloat.

What man was there sufficiently devoted to his fellows to risk his life against so vast and terrible an element, in a hollowed trunk of a tree with an oar as its only tackle ?

Diego Mendez, a young officer of the squadron of Columbus, who had already shown, in other extremities, that forgetfulness of self that makes heroes and works miracles, occurred

one night to the admiral's mind. He had him secretly summoned to his bedside, where he was confined by gout, and said to him :

"My son, of all those who are here, you and I alone appreciate the dangers that hold out to us but the prospect of death. One way alone remains for us to try. One must expose himself to death for the sake of all, or save us all. Are you willing to be he ?"

Mendez answered :

"Your excellency, I have often devoted myself for my fellows ; but there are some who complain and say that your partiality selects me when there is a brilliant action to be attempted. For this reason propose to the whole crew to-morrow the duty which you offer me, and, if no one accepts it, I will obey you."

On the following day, the admiral did what Mendez had requested.

All the crew, when questioned, protested against the possibility of a long voyage on a log of wood, a mere plaything of the wind and waves.

Mendez then came forward and said modestly :

"I have only one life to lose, but I am ready to risk it in your service and for the general safety ; I throw myself on the protection of God."

He set out and was lost, in the mists and foam on the horizon, to the eyes of the Spaniards, whose lives he carried with his own.

LXIII.

Meanwhile, the waiting without hope, their entire separation from the unknown world and the excess of their misfortune embittered his companions against the admiral, to whom they ascribed their desolation.

Two of his favourite officers, Diego and Francisco de Porras, whom he had treated as sons and invested with the chief commands in the squadron, were the first to promote complaints, insults, and, soon afterwards, sedition against him. Taking advantage of a crisis in his illness, which confined their benefactor to his bed, and, carrying with them half the soldiers and sailors, they seized a portion of the provisions and arms, ex-

cited their accomplices with cries of Castile ! Castile ! and overwhelmed the admiral with curses and outrages. Columbus, whom sickness disarmed and who could only raise his hands to heaven, begged them in vain to return to duty.

They scorned his tears as they had scorned his orders. They reproached him with his old age, his white hair, his bodily sufferings, and threatened him with the sword. Bartholomew Columbus armed himself with a spear, threw himself between them and the admiral, whom his servants were supporting in their arms, and, assisted by a faithful portion of the crew, he saved his brother's life and his authority over the fleet. The two Porras and fifty of their accomplices left the ships, laid waste the country, roused the natives to revolt by their crimes, vainly endeavoured to build boats to go to Hispaniola, and their compatriots on the vessels, were defeated by the fearless arm of Bartholomew, who killed their leader Francisco Porras, and finally submitted to duty, begging Columbus to pardon them for their ingratitude and rebellion.

Meanwhile the messenger of Columbus, on his trail tree trunk, had been guided by providence on the waste of water, and had stranded, like the fragment of a distant wreck, on the rocks of Hispaniola.

Conducted across the island by the natives he had reached Governor Ovando, after hardships and dangers without number. He had given him the admiral's message, and added by his story to the interest and pity with which the desperate situation of Columbus and his companions should have inspired his countryman.

But, whether it was incredulity, delay, or a concealed endeavour to work the ruin of a rival who was too great not to obstruct their feelings of gratitude, the Spaniards in Hispaniola had, under various pretexts, allowed the days and the months to pass by. Then they had sent, as if unwillingly, a small ship under the command of Escobar, to reconnoitre the situation of the wrecked vessels, without touching the coast or communicating with the crews.

This ship had, one night, appeared in the distance and disappeared from the eyes of Columbus and his sailors, with so much mystery, that their superstition had taken it for the

phantom of a vessel which had come to try their credulity or foretell their death.

Ovando at last decided to send some ships to the admiral to snatch him from mutiny, starvation and death. After sixteen months of shipwreck, the admiral, borne down by years, by his infirmities and disasters, again saw, for a few days, the island of which he had made an empire, and from which ingratitude and jealousy banished him. He passed some months there, well received, to all appearances, in the governor's house, but excluded from all influence in the government, seeing his enemies in favour, his friends expelled or persecuted on account of their faithfulness to him, and lamenting the ruin and slavery of the land which he had found like the garden of the world, and which he now again beheld as the tomb of his friends, the Indians.

His personal property confiscated, his revenues wasted, his lands dispeopled or uncultivated, left him a prey at once to poverty, sickness and old age. At last, hurried with his brother, his son, and some servants, on board a vessel which was returning to Europe, the implacable sea bore him from tempest to tempest to St. Lucar, where he disembarked on the 7th November, and whence he was carried to Seville, broken in strength, dying in body, unconquerable in mind, and immortal in will and hope.

LXIV.

The possessor of so many islands and continents had not a roof to shelter his head.

"If I wish to eat or sleep," he writes to his son from Seville, "I have to knock at the door of an inn, and I often have not the means to pay for my supper and my night's lodging!"

His misfortunes and his poverty were less intolerable to him than the distress of his companions and his servants, whom he had attached to his fortunes by so many hopes, and who reproached him with their wretchedness and disappointment. He wrote on their behalf to the King and Queen. But the ungrateful Porras, the defeated rebel, who owed his life to his magnanimity, was before him at the court and prejudiced Ferdinand's mind against him.

"I have served your Majesties," wrote Columbus to the

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King and Queen, "with as much zeal and constancy as I would have done to merit Paradise, and, if I have failed in anything, it is because my mind and strength could not go further!"

He counted, with reason, on the justice and favour of his protectress, Queen Isabella; but this prop to his cause was also about to fail him; family misfortune had reached her too. She was languishing, inconsolable, for the death of her favourite daughter. On the point of death, she wrote in her will this proof of her humility in her sovereign rank, and of her constancy to, and tenderness for, the husband to whom she wished to be united even in death:—

"Let my body be interred in the Alhambra at Granada, in a grave level with the ground, and trodden by the feet of men; let a plain stone tell my name! But if the King, my lord, chooses a burial-place in some other church, or in some other part of our kingdoms, I wish my body to be exhumed and removed for interment by the side of his, in order that the union of our bodies in the grave may attest and symbolize the union of our hearts during our lives, and, I hope, through the mercy of God, the union of our souls in heaven!"

"Oh, my son!" wrote Columbus to Diego, on hearing of the death of his benefactress, "let this be a lesson to you of what you must now do. The first thing is to commend the soul of the Queen, our sovereign, with piety and affection, to God. She was so good and so holy that we can be assured of her eternal glory and of her shelter in God's bosom from the cares and tribulations of the world. The second thing which I commend to you is to be watchful and assiduous in the service of the King; he is the head of Christendom. Remember, in thinking of him, that when the head suffers all the members suffer. All should pray for the solace and preservation of his life, but we above all who are his servants!"

Such were the sentiments of gratitude and allegiance felt by Columbus at the height of his calamities. But the death of Isabella not only carried with it his fortunes, it also carried his life. Detained at Seville by lack of means and by his growing infirmities, his only consolers were his brother Bartholomew and his second son Ferdinand. This boy, now sixteen years

old, gave, in all the grace of his youth, the promise of the solid qualities of the mature man.

"Love him like a brother," wrote Columbus to his eldest son, Diego, who was then at court; "you have no others. Ten brothers would not be too many for you. I have had no better friends than mine."

He begged Bartholomew to take the young man to the court and to commend him to the care of his legitimate son, Diego. Bartholomew left with Ferdinand for Segovia, where the court then resided. He vainly solicited attention and justice for Columbus. When spring had softened the air, Columbus himself set out for Segovia, accompanied by his brother and his sons.

His presence annoyed the king, his poverty was a reproach to the court. The rendering of judgment on his conduct and the restitution of his possessions and privileges were remitted to courts of equity, which, without daring to deny his rights, wore out his patience by delays; they at the same time wore out his life.

His mental anxiety and the anticipation of the destitution in which he would leave his brothers and his sons, sharpened his bodily afflictions.

"Your Majesty," he wrote to the King from his bed of suffering, "does not see fit to execute the promises which I received from you and from the Queen, who is now in glory. To strive against your will would be to strive against the wind. I have done what I ought to do; may God, who has ever been propitious to me, do the rest in accordance with his divine justice!"

He felt that his life, and not his firmness, was about to fail him. His brother Bartholomew and his son Diego were absent, by his order, to beg the favor of Queen Juana, daughter of Isabella, who had returned from Flanders to Castile. Physical pain and mental anguish, the knowledge of the shortness of his life, now too brief for him to hope for justice before its close; the triumphs of his enemies at court, the mockery of the courtiers, the coldness of the King, the forebodings of his last hour, the isolation in which the absence of his brother and son had left him in a city of forgetfulness or ingratitude; the memories of a life, one-half of which had been passed in awaiting the hour of fortune's greatness, the other half in bewailing

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the vanity or genius; doubtless, also, pity for that innocent Indian race which he had found free, like children in their garden of Eden, and which he left in slavery, robbed and defiled by the hands of their oppressors; his brothers without support, his sons without inheritance; uncertainty as to his fame among posterity; the agony of unrecognised genius; all these sufferings of his limbs, of his mind, his body and his soul, of the past, the present and the future, weighed together on the old man, abandoned in his room at Segovia during the absence of his brothers and his children. He asked one of his servants, and his wretchedness, to bring to his bed a little breviary, the gift of Pope Alexander VI. at the time when sovereigns treated him as a king. He wrote his will with a failing hand on a page of this book, to which he attributed the virtue of a heavenly consecration.

A strange sight for his poor servant! This old man, forsaken by mankind, and lying on a pauper's bed in a house that had been temporarily lent to him in Segovia, distributed, in his will, seas, hemispheres and islands, continents, nations and empires.

He made his legitimate son Diego his principal heir; in the event of Diego's death without issue, he entailed these rights on his natural son, young Ferdinand; and lastly, if Ferdinand himself should die before having issue, the inheritance passed to the favourite brother of Columbus, Bartholomew, and his heirs.

"I beseech my sovereigns and their successors," he said, "to follow my wishes for ever in the distribution of my rights, possessions and appointments: I who, born at Genoa, came to Castile to serve them, and who have discovered, in the west, the continent, the islands and India! My son will hold my post as admiral of that part of the ocean which is to the west of a line drawn from pole to pole."

Passing from that to the disposition of the revenues which had been assured to him by his treaty with Isabella and Ferdinand, the old man distributed with liberality and wisdom the millions which would revert to his family between his sons and his brother Bartholomew, assigning a quarter to his brother, and two millions a year to Ferdinand, his second son. He remembered the mother of this boy, Beatrice Enriquez, whom

he had never married, and for the desertion of whom during his years of wandering at sea his conscience reproached him.

He charged his heir to make a handsome allowance to his consort in the days of his obscurity, while he was struggling at Toledo against the hardships of his early lot. He even seemed to accuse himself of some ingratitude or some neglect in showing affection for the object of his second love, for he added to the bequest he made to her these words, which must have weighed down his dying hand :

"Let this be done for the relief of my conscience, for her name and memory are a burden on my soul !"

Then reverting to his first country, which a second country never blots from the heart of man, he remembered the city of Genoa, where time had garnered all his father's house, but where there remained to him some distant relation, like the roots which remain in the soil after the tree is felled.

"I enjoin my son Diego," he wrote, "to support forever, in the city of Genoa, a member of our family who will live there with his wife, and to secure him a becoming livelihood, such as is suitable to one who is related to us. I wish this kinsman to retain his standing and nationality in that city, as a citizen ; for I was born and came from there.

"Let my son," he adds with that chivalrous sentiment of fealty and of subordination of self to his sovereign, which was the second religion of the time, "let my son, in memory of me, serve the King, the Queen and their successors, even to the sacrifice of his possessions and his life, since, after God, it is they who furnished with the means of making my discoveries !"

"It is indeed true," he goes on with an involuntary tone of bitterness, resembling a reproach half stifled in his memory, "that I came from far to make them the offer and that a long time passed before people were willing to believe in the gift I brought their majesties ; but that was natural, for it was a mystery for all the world, and could only give rise to incredulity. That is why I ought to share my fame with the sovereigns who were the first to give me credence."

LXV.

Columbus then turned all his thoughts towards the God whom he had always regarded as his own and true sovereign ;

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it seemed to him that he acted under the direct orders of that providence, whose instrument and delegate he felt himself to be more than any other man.

Resignation and enthusiasm, the two mainsprings of his life, were not absent at his death. He bowed under the hand of nature and raised himself under the hand of God, which he had always seen through his triumphs and disasters, and now saw more nearly at the moment of his departure from the world. He was lost in repentance for his sins and in the hope of his double immortality.

By nature a poet, as we have seen in his speeches and writings, he borrowed from the sacred poetry of the psalms the last inspirations of his soul and the last faltering accents of his lips. He uttered in Latin the last good-bye to this world, and audibly gave his soul to his Creator: a servant content with his handiwork, and discharged from service in the visible world, which he had enlarged, to pass, in the invisible world, to the possession of the incommensurable expanse of infinite creation.

LXVI.

The jealousy and ingratitude of his age and of his king vanished with the last breath of the great man of whom they had made their victim.

A man's contemporaries seem eager to atone to the dead for the persecutions they have inflicted on the living.

They gave Columbus royal obsequies. His body, and, later, that of his son, after having rested in various tombs in different cathedrals in Spain, were removed and interred, according to their wishes, at Hispaniola, the conqueror in the land of his conquest.

They now repose at Cuba. But, by a strange judgment of God or by the thankless inconsistency of men, of all the countries of America that disputed the honour of preserving his ashes, none preserved his name.

LXVII.

All the characteristics of the truly great man are united in his name: genius, work, patience, the accident of obscure

birth overcome by natural energy ; quiet but unwearied pertinacity in attaining his end, resignation to the will of heaven, the struggle against events, the long and solitary deliberation on an idea and its heroic execution in action ; intrepidity and coolness in the face of the elements let loose in the tempest, and in the face of death threatened by rebellion ; confidence in the guiding star, not of a man but of humanity ; his life carelessly thrown away without a backward glance when he threw himself on this unknown and phantom-peopled ocean ; a Rubicon fifteen hundred leagues across, much more desperate than Cæsar's ; indefatigable study, knowledge as vast as the horizon of his time, the skilful but honest handling of the hearts of men to tempt them to the truth ; decorum, nobility and dignity of person that revealed the greatness of his soul and captivated eyes and hearts alike ; speech equal to and on a level with his thoughts ; an eloquence that brought conviction to kings, and subdued the mutiny of his crews ; a poetry of style that made his stories a fitting expression of the marvels of his discoveries and of the pictures of nature ; a boundless love, ardent and active for humanity even in those distant places where she no longer remembers those who serve her ; the wisdom of the legislator and the serenity of a philosopher in the government of his colonies, a fatherly pity for the Indians, the children of the human race, whose guardianship he wished to assign to the Old World, and not their enslavement to oppressors ; forgetfulness of injuries, magnanimity in pardon to his enemies ; lastly, piety—that virtue which contains all the others and makes them divine when it exists as it existed in the soul of Columbus ; the constant presence of God in his mind, integrity in his conscience, and mercy in his heart ; gratitude in success and resignation in disaster ; everywhere and always adoration ! Such was this man.

We know of none more complete. He embodied many men in one. He was worthy to personify the Old World in the unknown world on which he was to be the first to land, and to bear to these men of another race all the virtues of the old continent without one of its vices.

His influence on civilization was incalculable. He completed the universe and perfected the physical unity of the globe ; which was to advance much further than had been done until his time,

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the work of God : the moral unity of mankind. This work, to which Columbus thus contributed, was indeed too great to be worthily recompensed by conferring his name on earth's fourth continent.

America does not bear his name ; mankind, drawn together and united by him, will bear it throughout the globe.

THE END.